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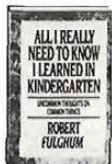
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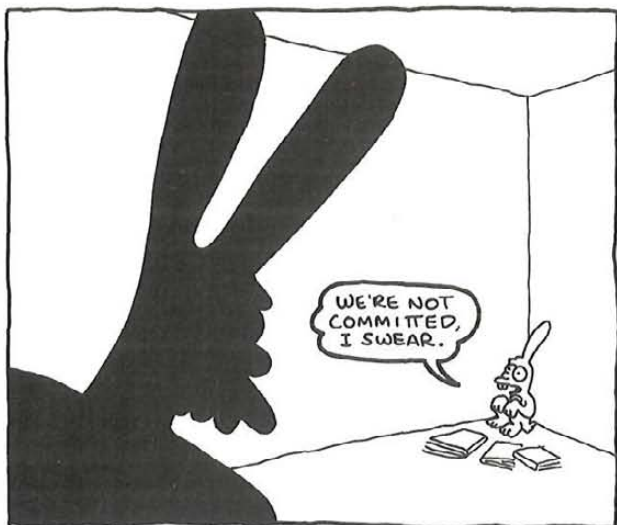
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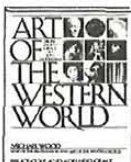
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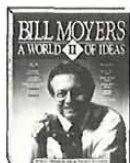
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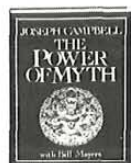
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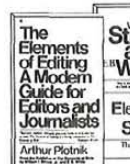
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VOLUME 2, No. 124

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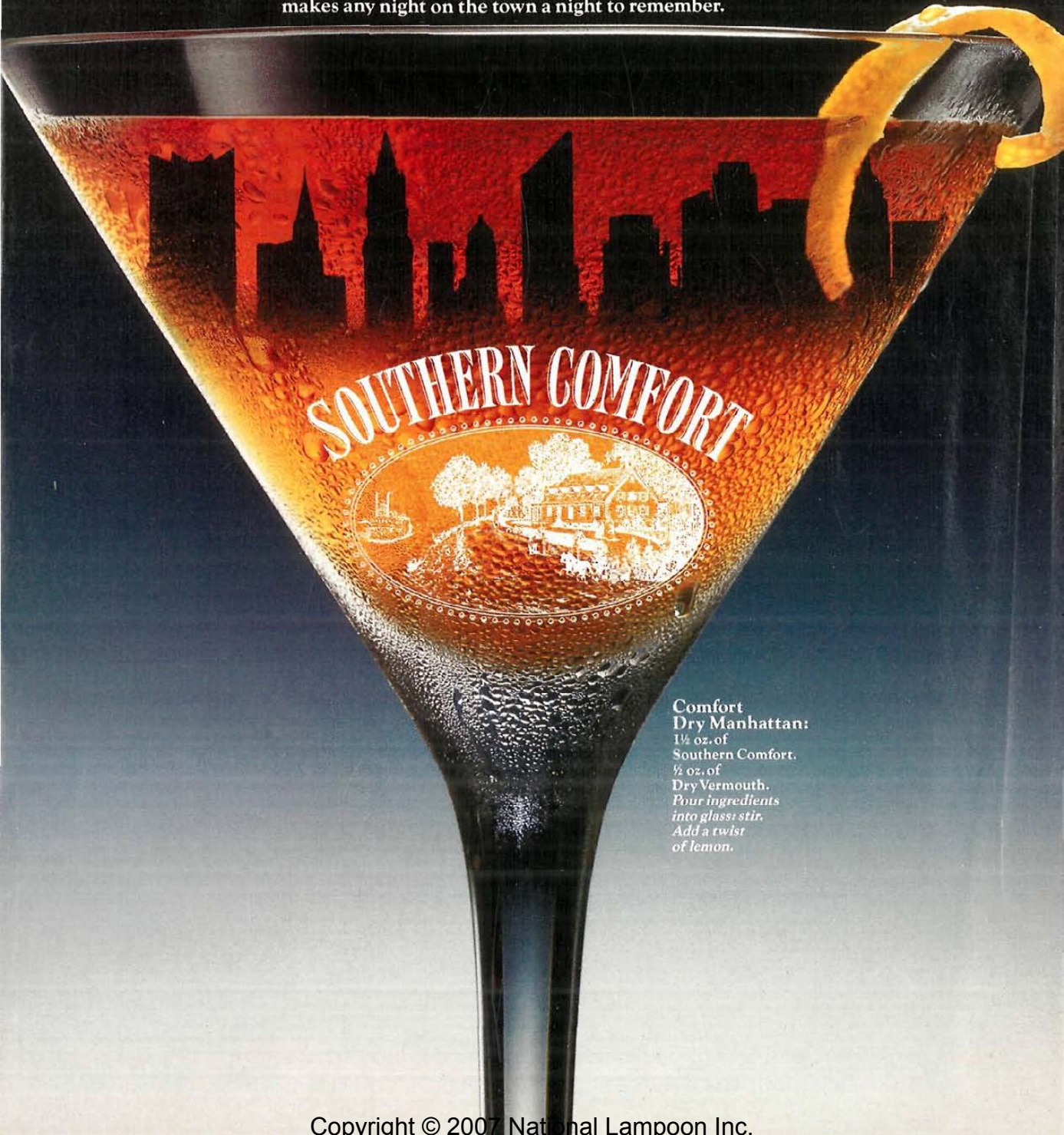
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Doug Taylor

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of lemon.*

I got up at 7:00 this morning, made cappuccino, spent fifteen minutes on the Lifecycle, showered, walked Cognac, our Akita, picked up our dry cleaning (\$35.75), ate my bran muffin, and read the *Journal*. I balanced my checkbook, balanced his checkbook, added up last month's receipts (it pays come tax time), called my mother, and called his mother. It's now 11:30. I just checked and he's still asleep. He says I'm a compulsive yuppie workaholic, but that's just a reverse psychology thing he does to excuse his own laziness. Like he's normal and I'm not. Look at the facts: I'm a successful investment banker. He's the editor of a (loosely defined) humor magazine. I make \$125,000 a year. He makes less—a lot less. I wash dishes while I'm cooking and am generous with the saffron (twenty-seven dollars an ounce) when I make seafood risotto. He would live on whatever could be scarfed up at press-function buffet tables. I use deodorant/antiperspirant. He turns his T-shirts inside out after a few days. I have the lease to this apartment, pay all the bills, and send out the Christmas cards. He just signed us up for SportsChannel, another eighteen dollars a month, which he argues is a great deal. I ask: who is the rational one in this household? You figure it out.

And now I'm writing his column. Not



Fred Winkowski

## EDITOR'S GIRLFRIEND

so surprising: while I was studying economics, psychology, and fencing, he was traveling around the Golden Triangle, picking fruit and searching for Nirvana. While I was cutting my teeth at the very competitive firm of Stern, Zulack & Williamson, he was living at home with his parents trying to teach his mutt, Roach, how to catch a Frisbee. But don't misunderstand me. I love the guy. I adore the way he conks out whenever we try to watch Bill Moyers together. I get a kick out his conspiracy theories. (He's convinced that the *New York Times* is a CIA paper. I think he just says that 'cause *USA Today* has a better sports section.) And he's pretty good in bed. Truth is, I'm thirty-five and intend to pursue conception aggressively. He may not be qualified to do much, but I reckon he would make a good father. He's got a lot in common with children.

So I'm willing to cover his ass and write this column while he sleeps. I don't know exactly how to go about this, so I'm basing it on Tina Brown's editorials in *Vanity Fair*. Really, what better model? She's the epitome of the real wit and class you find in the better tax brackets:

"Just months ago, humor was all the talk in the fetes about town. From Palm Beach to Palm Springs, stand-up comedians were a must at the better brunches. But a glut in the current market has put hundreds of court jesters on skid row. In this issue, dear reader, we investigate the decline of wit, jest, and sally waggery. We probe the sad ramifications of the wimpy wisecrack, the divisive nature of drollery, the ill-prepared *bon mot* of life in our post-industrialized age.

"Is levity limping along toward a last lethal laugh? Has the punch line finally struck a fatal blow? Based on the stories in this issue, it is for you, the reader, to decide."

Done. Another item I can check off his list of things to do; though, honestly, I can't imagine that anything in the magazine will be as funny as his face when I wake him up with my new Suzanne Vega album. Sure, he'll bitch and moan, but that's tough. I'm ovulating today and it's time for him to rise and do something useful. ■



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# DANNY DEVITO...TONY DANZA...JUDD HIRSCH... MARILU HENNER...CHRISTOPHER LLOYD...ANDY KAUFMAN... BEFORE THEY WERE STARS, THEY ALL DROVE A

Tony Danza was an unknown boxer from Brooklyn, Danny DeVito was just breaking into films. Judd Hirsch and Christopher Lloyd were stage actors. Marilu Henner had been in the Broadway chorus of "Grease." And Andy Kaufman was a cult-favorite comic.

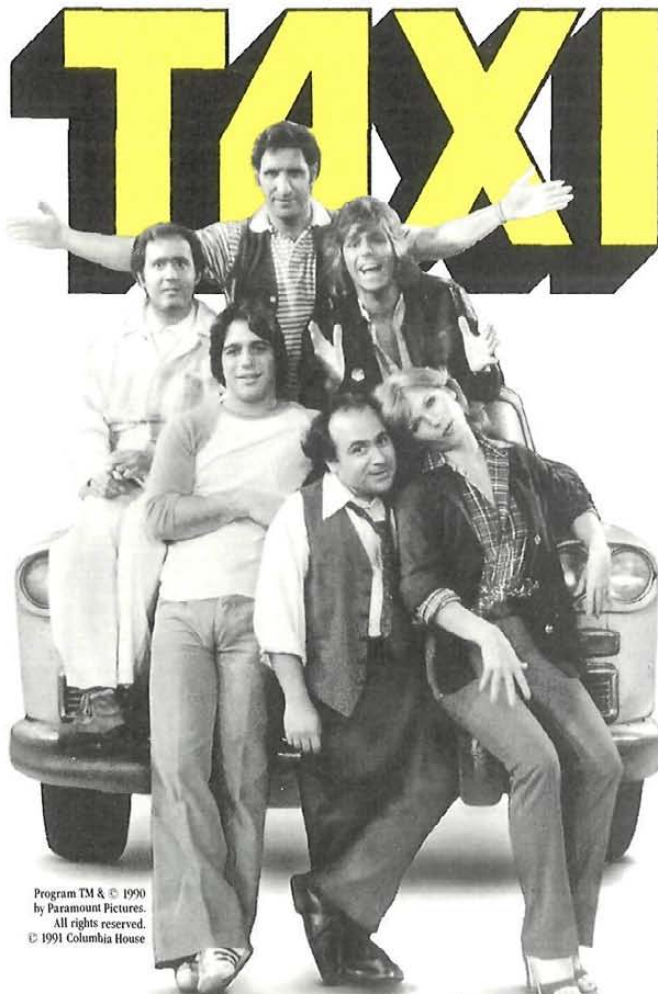
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## LETTERS

Sirs:

I have been meaning to do this for a very long time, but only after this most recent issue am I finally moved to action. I just want to tell you how much I enjoy reading your magazine. First off, I thought your comic dissection of the American savings and loan mess was masterly. Clever, informed, and, above all, devastatingly funny. I would go so far as to call it a modern satirical masterpiece. And as a delightful bit of fluff, Wanda Taylor's short story "The Don, the Fawn, and the Prawn" was marvelous, I thought. But I must say that my favorite part of the magazine has always been, and remains, the regular features section at the front. I love the wonderful caricatures you do of famous architects. I think Hugh Wytan's "Craven Images" column is four parts genius, one part razor blade. And I can scarcely finish a single line of Emily Balbo's monthly "Scouring Pad" ere I am convulsed with boyish fits of laughter. I could go on, of course, but further gushing would be unseemly. Suffice it to say, I think your brilliant magazine may be the only thing worth reading anymore; I love it. One question, however: is it true that the North American edition is different from the international edition?

Robert St. John Smythe  
Coxcomb-on-Cuckold  
Spertsfordshire, England

Sirs:

How come you never answer letters? People are always writing in with questions, humorous and otherwise, but you never respond. Why is that?

Andy Bottle  
Stillwater, Tex.

Sirs:

I am a fourteen-year-old girl writing to protest you're recent review of New Kids on the Block! How could you!!! If you're reviewer *really* thinks that they're a bunch of "smarmy, robotic candidates for the Future Has-Beens Hall of Fame" then I'd like to see *him* try to have one-tenth the talent of Jon or Jordan!!! I think that he is just jealous of their popularity and the fact that tens of thousands of teenage girls have formed themselves into a vigilante band sworn to revenge bad reviews of New Kids forever. All we have to say is "Your next!!!"

Karen  
Teenybopper with a gum

Sirs:

Well, Valentine's Day approaches, and that means home-improvement time. Many's the time that Cupid's arrow has been blunted due to a lack of proper weather stripping or a sloppy wallpaper job. It's all in my book, *Wiring YOUR Heart for Love*.

Don Casanova  
Channel 43 on your system



Sirs:

The reports of my death are completely accurate.

Mark Twain  
Life on the Styx

Sirs:

Oooooooooohhhhhhhhh!!! Did you see that jam? Jeeeeeessuss! What a move! A double-pump reverse slam! Holy shit!!! Oh my God, another one! A gorilla two-handed 360! Watch the replay, honey! Holy...

Another Suburban Middle-class  
White Guy Watching the NBA  
All-Star Slam Dunk Contest and  
Getting Way Too Excited  
Fort Wayne, Ind.

Sirs:

Look at you. Always lyin' around. Why don't you get up and do something? Lazy ass!

Your Uncle  
Coming over on a summer afternoon  
and bothering the shit out of you

Sirs:

Jeez, 8,972 commercials later and still no snatch. Just gum. Motherfuck-ing stupid-ass shit-licking gum.

Those Two Poor Saps Who  
Are Always Chasing After the  
Doublemint Twins

Sirs:

He was an old man who fished with the Japanese in the Pacific and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a tuna. In the first forty days he had taken dolphin and whale and turtle and sea otter and seagull, but he had not taken a tuna...

The Old Man and  
the Drift Net

Sirs:

I just took The Road Less Traveled, and they cleaned me out—my wallet, credit cards, and Rolex! This brief letter has perhaps not been as specific as readers might like. But the central message is: I got my ass handed to me!

M. Scott Peck, M.D.  
Never visiting New York again!

Sirs:

Of course we'd settle for closeness and cuddling. We never have *real* orgasms with you guys anyway.

Women  
At the appliance store

Sirs:

Kudos on your decision to no longer rely so heavily on the sort of humor wherein lewd and unlikely quotes are falsely attributed to celebrities. It's gross, tired, and decidedly unfunny, like sticking your tongue in the mouth of a corpse after you've run a marathon.

Donald Trump  
Atlantic City, N.J.



Illustrations by Jessie Hartland



Sirs:

BENEFIT FROM THE PEACEFUL BENEVOLENCE OF OUR LORD OR WITHER UNDER HIS INEXPLICABLE AND UNYIELDING WRATH!!!

Print this letter in your magazine. Then make fifteen copies of it and send them to fifteen other magazine editors.

Mr. M. Saffron, a minor functionary at *The New Yorker*, scoffed at this letter and threw it away. Nine days later, he sat on a row of thumbtacks that had been epoxied to his office chair.

Ms. Marie Freeman of *Cosmopolitan* printed this letter and sent it on to fifteen other editors. The following month she received a five-dollar McDonald's gift certificate in the mail.

Bert Pilltrand of *Field & Stream* responded to this letter by publishing an angry editorial against chain letters. A week later, he discovered that his personal water cooler had been filled with what looked like urine (it was only yellow food coloring, but he didn't know that).

Mr. E. R. Muldoon of *Motor Trend*



Magazine received a very faded copy of this letter. He not only printed it, but also retyped it before sending it on to fifteen other editors. Three weeks later, he found a gift-wrapped box of Russell Stover chocolates on the dashboard of his car.

The choice is yours, gentlemen. Enjoy the good luck that the Almighty will bestow on you for carrying out His whims, or face His everlasting fury. Remember, God is watching!

One of a Long Line of Magazine Editors

Sirs:

I read that *Playboy* brushes out a lot of pubic hairs. Where do they go? And can I have some?

A Collector

Dear Collector:

No.

Hugh Hefner  
Rolling in it, thanks

Sirs:

Got it. Got it. Need it. Got it. Need it. Got it. Got it. Need it. Need it. Need it.

Your New Roommate  
Alone in the dorm room  
for the first time

Sirs:

Yes, I am cancer.

That "Freckle" You  
First Noticed Yesterday

Sirs:

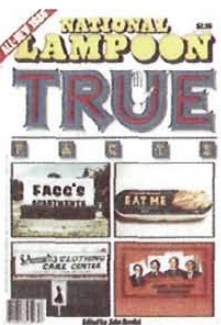
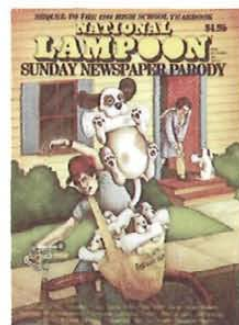
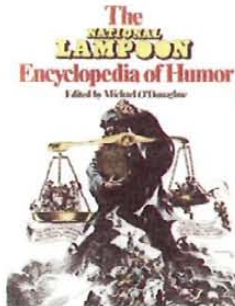
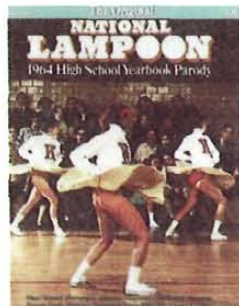
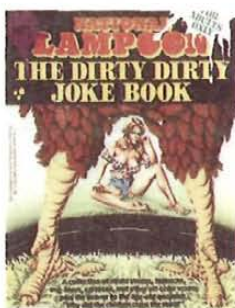
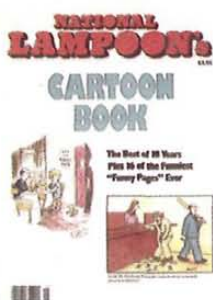
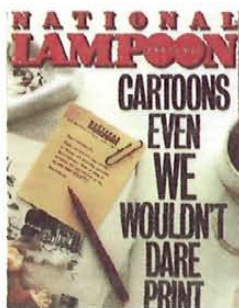
Sure, I used Emile Durkheim's words, but it wasn't plagiarism—it was a *sample*. Hey, if M.C. Hammer can do it, so can I.

College Students Before  
College Deans Everywhere



"All right, everybody, what's going on here?"

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- National Lampoon True Facts** The original, uncensored work, now available in English. It all happened. \$2.95
- National Lampoon True Facts '86** The third all-new collection not even we could dream up. \$2.95
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- Son of Cartoons Even We Wouldn't Dare Print II: A Sequel** Even worse than the first. \$2.95
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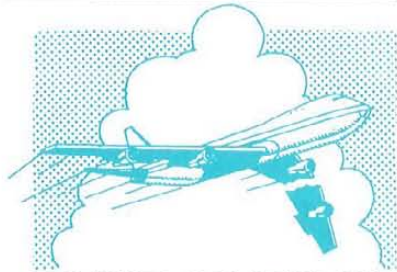
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Fred Winkowski

## DON'T GO THERE

### Table 39 at the Upstairs Dinner Theater in Omaha, Nebraska

Enveloped in inky blackness far back and to the left of the stage, sandwiched between a metal cart full of dirty dishes and a busted cigarette machine, table 39 at the Upstairs Dinner Theater in Omaha, Nebraska, transforms the sublime pleasures of dinner theater into an evil cavalcade of unrelenting horrors.

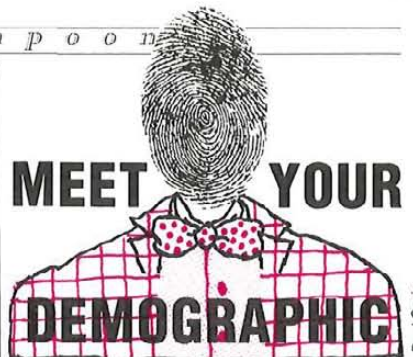
For starters, the table is so far from the buffet that just getting some food requires a twisting, bumping, squinting trek in front of the blinding lights of the stage and through other tables of happy diners. By the time you return to your table your food is damp and cold, floating in whatever beverage you were foolish enough to think you could convey back to your seat. And since the bathrooms are in the lobby, having to pee when sitting at table 39 becomes a nightmare of shame when the collective eyes of a sold-out house contemptuously follow your sad little improvisation of palsied, hunchbacked contrition.

Your "entertainment" at table 39 consists solely of the unexpressive backsides of those actors who stand stage right. During the recent production of Neil Simon's *Chapter Two*, for example, important scenes in George's apartment were almost completely obscured—a cruel and maddening punishment for the fan of Neil Simon. But punishment turns to torture at the end of your evening, when you are subjected to the joyous huzzahs of departing fellow patrons—a vicious counterpoint to your own agonizingly incomplete experience.



Sean Chapman

When musicals come to the Upstairs Dinner Theater, the devil himself wouldn't sit at table 39. The two-man synth-and-drum orchestra is practically sitting in your lap; the singers are belting out tunes to everyone in the house but you. It might all be endurable if the price of your admission remotely reflected the size of your enjoyment—but for a Saturday-night performance, you'll pay the same \$24.44 that those bastards paid to sit at table 15. Don't go there. ■



Paul Corio

## MEET YOUR DEMOGRAPHIC

*National Lampoon* isn't just a magazine—it represents a system of values, a lifestyle, a community of buyers. Let's get to know one member of our community:

**JOHN LESKO**, twenty-seven, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

Something of a maverick (consumes 26.4 liters of imported alcoholic beverages a year), but undoubtedly unpretentious (purchases unwashed, boot-leg jeans), John Lesko has a taste for the absurd (wears orange high-tops), as well as a sensitive side (saw *Ghost* twice) that goes well with his macho (favors leather jackets, smokes cigarettes) appearance. In his discretionary time, John enjoys "you know, just relaxing" (leisure dollar apportioned accordingly: athletic equipment, sportswear, adult contemporary radio and recordings)—relaxation he's earned, since his job as a sales representative keeps him on the go (15 to 20 percent of weekly income devoted to automotive supplies). Also, John has recently become more concerned about current affairs (responsive to "recycled paper" and "no cholesterol" packaging). What does John find in *National Lampoon* that's so appealing? "It's upmarket humor that's positioned for me."

## FEUILLETON



### Further Tales of the Algonquin by Van Cortlandt Parks

**Editor's note:** Van Cortlandt Parks was an editorial assistant at The New Yorker during the glory days of the Algonquin Round Table. He died recently at the age of eighty-three, garrulous as ever and, in fact, still an editorial assistant at The New Yorker. We are pleased to publish his reminiscences, which appear in print for the first time.

It so happened that Dorothy Parker and Robert Benchley were the first to arrive for lunch one blustery winter

day. Clinging tightly to their wraps, they took their customary places at that famous table. The waiter approached.

"Would you like something to start with, madam?"

"I think I'll begin with the borscht," Parker replied.

"Very good, madam," the waiter said, scribbling on his pad. He turned to Benchley. "And you, sir?"

"I'm sorry?" Benchley said, looking over the top of his menu.

"Your order, sir. Something to start with?"

"Ah, yes. Of course. Is it good?" he asked.

"What, sir?"



"The borscht," was Benchley's reply. "Is it good?"

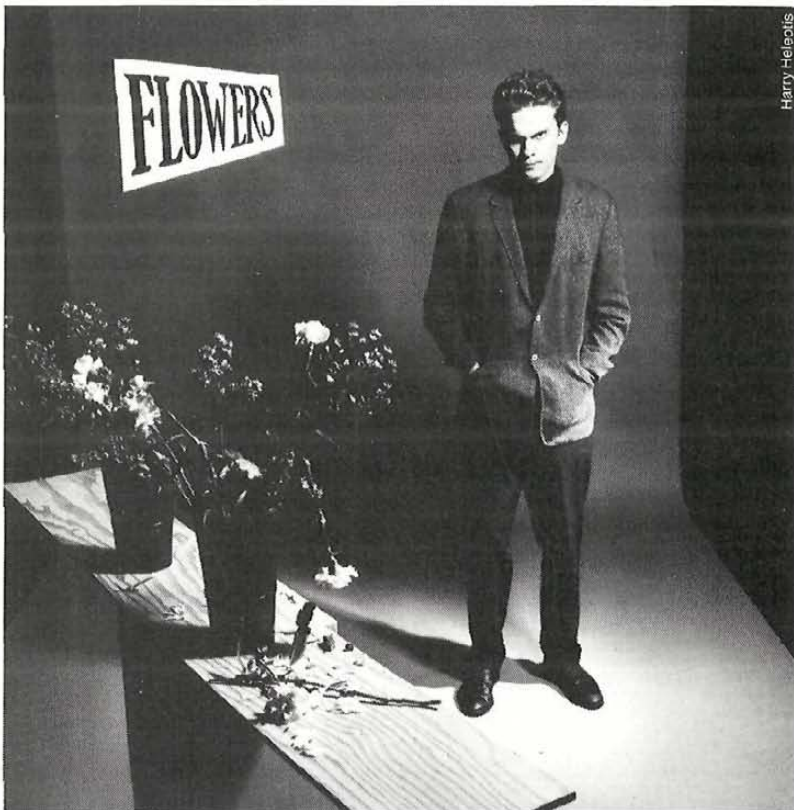
"Y-yes, I believe it is," the little waiter stammered.

Benchley paused. "Then I think I'll have that, then."

Moss Hart loved practical jokes, and never more than when they involved his partner, George S. Kaufman.

# BECKETT AT SIXTEEN

## STRAIGHT TALK TO TEENS FROM SAMUEL BECKETT



**Prom Night** We are given birth astride the grave, Prom Night comes, then there is darkness once more. Do not despair: your date will require little more from you than a small white corsage—if such a corsage exists (if not, then perhaps a rotten turnip)—to wear around her wrist. Do not presume: the florist, who's old, may be, at this very moment, lying dead in a ditch; the greengrocer may have himself eaten his very last turnip. *Improbe amor, quid non mortalia pectora cogis.* ... The important thing is to be yourself.

One day he excitedly told the group of his plan to have a "roast" for his collaborator. The twist, Hart explained, was that Kaufman would actually be skewered on a spit and served as the main course. We agreed that it was a splendid plan; however, Kaufman got word of it, and when the time came to fetch him for the event, we discovered that he had just left on a long cruise to Europe!

Hart summed up the situation nicely. "Next time," he quipped, "I'll keep my plans a secret."

Alexander Woollcott thought himself the group's arbiter of taste, a self-estimate we used to love to tease him about. Once, when H. L. Mencken was in town from Baltimore, Woollcott took the offensive. "Why don't you give Fitzgerald double his word rate?" the portly pundit gibed.

"Why don't you?" was Mencken's memorable riposte.

"I'd like a cigar, too."

It was the actress Ruth Gordon speaking. Occasionally she would find time

to get away from her actors' workshop in Greenwich Village and join us—and when she did, she liked to "lunch to the fullest," in Heywood Hale Broun's phrase. She would recite ribald poetry and drink excessively, usually for the benefit of one of the table's more timorous guests. On this occasion, Ruth's "victim" was none other than Percy MacKaye, the poet and dramatist. Percy was as well known for his delicate sensibility as for his predilection for fine Macanudos, so when Ruth coyly asked for one of her own, the table was hushed.

"I'm sorry," was his rejoinder,

"but this is my last one and I've already put it in my mouth."

With a twinkle in her eye and not a skipped beat, Gordon shot back, "I see. Well, never mind, then, Percy. But thanks anyway."

It was a marvelous time, the like of which has not been seen since.

### Art World Notes

...Joy Cumin-tang, the New York-based experimental scent artist and director of the Olfactory Factory, a non-profit alternative space in Long Island City, has arranged with New Jersey

## NEW NATIONAL LAMPOON SLANG

**headload** *n.*

**dogtown** *n.*

**stiltskinned** *adj.*

**half-battered** *adj.*

**enganchado** *n.*

**Jane Maker** *n.*

**contumely** *n.*

## Stories We're Working On

**Coming next month—  
more hard-nosed NatLamp humor:**

Oil prices skyrocket and threaten our way of life. What's the humor angle? Our special report roots it out.

Dirty words in the dictionary? They say it's true. Jan Burke whips out his Webster's for a closer look.

"Cross-Country," a humorous short story by Tracy Biggs.

Something about March. Maybe a St. Patrick's Day thing. Could be a cartoon. Perhaps a letter?

"Postmark: Insanity." Good title. Could be anything. Column? Recurring feature? Something for the True section?

A list, a chart, a graph... something that shows something in a funny way.

**ALL IN THE MARCH NATIONAL LAMPOON,  
ON SALE FEBRUARY 14.**

## Longshot Fats's Historical Point Spreads

(Home Teams in CAPS)

### FAVORITE

### UNDERDOG

#### Blue-Gray Classic

**North** 12 **SOUTH**

Yankee war machine looks too tough for homesteading rebs. This one's not close. Fats will feast with 10 units on North.

#### Little Caesar's Pizza Barbarian Invitational

**Visigoths** 2 **ROMANS**

Some say Romans on the decline, but Fats loves those legions of experience. 5 units on Romans.

**GODZILLA** 6½ **Mothra**

We're riding the Mothra Mojo to the tune of 10 units.

**NATURE** pick 'em **Man**

Bets like these are how Longshot Fats got his name. 15 units on Man.

**FATCATS** 21 **Proles**

Proles have plenty of grit, but means of production is what wins class struggles. What does Fats get for the capitalist who has everything? How about 10 units?

#### Eastern Front Championship (at Stalingrad)

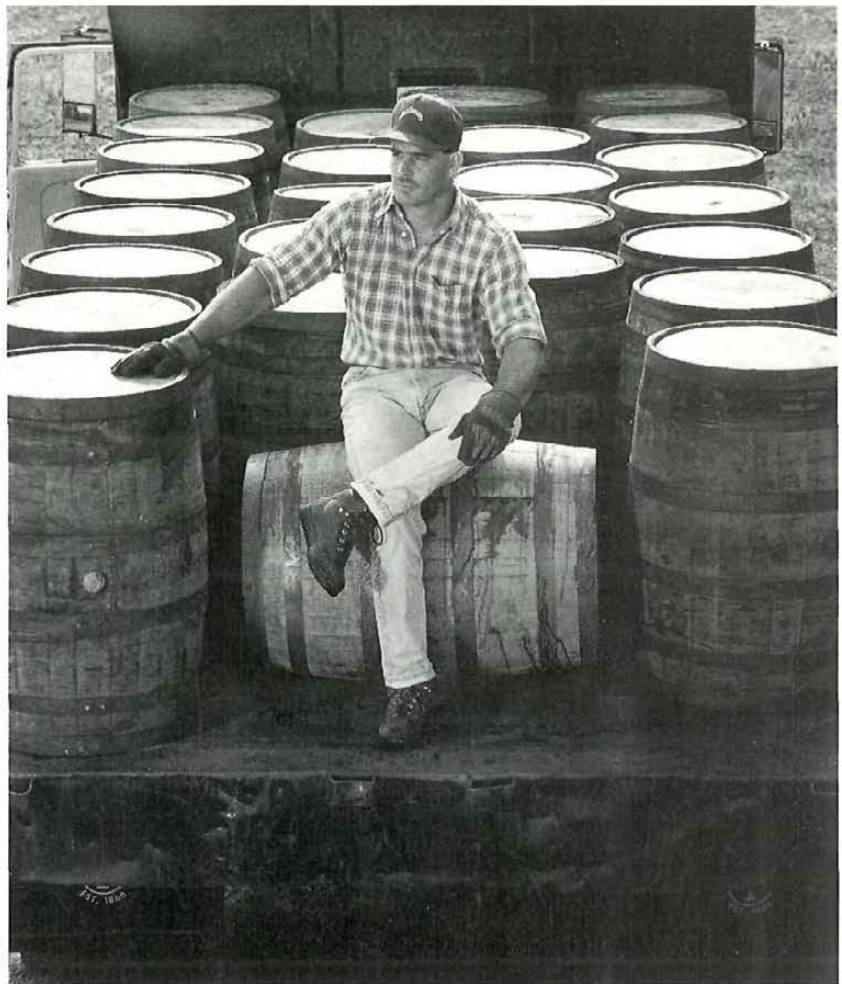
**Germans** 4 **RUSSIANS**

Line opened much higher but price has dropped with the wintry Russki temperatures, making Krauts the choice for bargain hunters. 5 units on Nazis.

LAST WEEK: Spanish Armada—Carthaginians parlay cost us 255 charlemagnes and brought the season total to a minus 986.

authorities to take over the stink around the Turnpike and Elizabeth for a month-long demonstration of her work. The area, always a redolent one, appealed to Cumin-tang because of its "incredible richness and variety" and because residents were "totally supportive" and "already used to the smell." The site-specific project is being funded in part by the petrochemical industry, and is a continuation of the artist's effort to recontextualize environments by working directly with "found" smells. "My emphasis is on spontaneous, collagelike man-

CONTINUED



If you've never visited our Tennessee distillery, we hope you'll do so soon. We're just an hour below Nashville.

TO BE A JACK DANIEL'S BARRELMAN, it's most helpful to be on the husky side.

Jason Murray may not be straining himself at the moment. But when called upon to hoist an empty whiskey barrel, or to roll a filled one down a warehouse's length, he's up to the job. Jason likes to work hard. But he also enjoys restful moments. Which, come to think of it, describes a lot of the folks who like spending time with our smooth-sippin' Jack Daniel's Whiskey.

SMOOTH SIPPIN'  
TENNESSEE WHISKEY

Tennessee Whiskey • 40-43% alcohol by volume (80-86 proof) • Distilled and Bottled by Jack Daniel Distillery, Lem Motlow, Proprietor, Route 1, Lynchburg (Pop 361), Tennessee 37352  
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**MARITHE  
FRANÇOIS  
GIRBAUD**

# NATIONAL LAMPOON'S INDEX

Years Fred Grandy played the ship's purser on *The Love Boat*: 6  
 Terms Congressman Grandy of Iowa has served in the House of Representatives: 2

Times Representative Grandy has accidentally referred to the floor of Congress as the "lido deck": 11

Times Representative Ben "Cooter" Jones of Georgia has referred to White House Chief of Staff John Sununu as "Boss Hogg": 19

Average age of teenagers who admit to licking toads to get a buzz: 17  
 Percentage who asked first how the toad felt about the whole thing: 9

Acres of compost provided by exposing Marie Osmond to sunlight and water, allowing her to break into her constituent elements: 2

Hours the San Francisco Bay area could be provided with electrical power by reclaiming the petroleum content of M.C. Hammer's clothing: 93

Percentage increase in size of the Russian mafia since *perestroika*: 400

Price to have someone in the Soviet Union murdered, in American dollars: 50  
 Estimated cost of having the entire Soviet parliament and military command rubbed out: \$135,000

Potential savings to the American taxpayers, per year: \$120,000,000,000

Volume in liters occupied by George Will's head, fully inflated, upon the release of the bow-tie-shaped pressure valve around his neck: 26

Hours required for Pat Buchanan, after being taken to Kenya and abandoned underground in the habitat of the pointy-headed mole, to become culturally assimilated: 48

Calories consumed by John McLaughlin after biting off the head of an adversary and masticating: 13,200

Love potion number: 9

Hours after the fall of Kuwait required for Hank Williams, Jr. to write, record, release, and distribute anti-Iraqi theme "Don't Give Us a Reason": 18

Foot-pounds exerted by Hank Williams, Jr.'s knee in full jerk: 38,000

Percentage of Iraqis who think the existence of Hank Williams, Jr. is reason enough for them: 73

Dollars spent creating the Hubble Space Paperweight: 13,000,000,000

Times the U.S. and Iraq have publicly communicated through press announcements on CNN: 19

Instances where the release was mistakenly sent through *Nick at Nite*: 1

American television viewers who were led to believe that Mr. Ed had seized all Kuwaiti assets: 280,000

Angolan families whose protein requirements would be met for a month by Julia Roberts's lips: 31

Bob Harris

## INTRODUCING... THE MOXIE ORIGINALS!

(A NATIONAL LAMPOON JOINT VENTURE WITH THE COMICS CONSORTIUM)

This month's Original:  
**SIDEKICK**

**POWERS:** Supportive, handy, tough negotiator.



Paul Corio

**WEAKNESS:** Frequently captured when separated from other Moxie Originals.

**REAL IDENTITY:** Rick LaCoste, craft-boutique owner, Santa Fe, New Mexico.

**ORIGIN STORY:** A shy, self-effacing man with a nose for marketing, Rick LaCoste was transformed into Sidekick by a radioactive shipment of hand-hammered ore earrings. Reluctant to take a high-profile position, he hooked up with The Trend, who vacations in Santa Fe, and joined the Originals (see M.O. #7).

**HIGH ADVENTURES:** Captured by Baron von Fondle (M.O. #8) • Captured by Snakeface (M.O. #14) • Captured by the League of Derision

**Quote:** "And make *mine* a double!"

**READ THE NEW MOXIE ORIGINALS (ISSUE 37)—ON SALE AT YOUR LOCAL SPECIALTY SHOP TODAY!**

ipulations," Cumin-tang explained, "on working with what's there...."

...The West German terrorist organization, the Wolfgang-Mitgang Gang, will bring its latest guerrilla theater piece, *Experimental Detonations Series No. 12*, to the United States this fall, thanks to grants from the Deutsche Semtex Konsortium AG and the Amcon-Gelignite Fund. The gang, which had fallen on hard times with the sudden loss of state sponsorship by the now-defunct German Democratic Republic, has retro-

fitted itself as a guerrilla theater group and gone on to make a splash in the art world. The traveling terrorist troupe will visit this country for the first time on a cultural exchange, and will limit its tour to the business and financial districts of major cities. Performance areas will be necessarily restricted; innocent bystanders may be involved only upon request.

...Spanish Joe, Indian Mike, Earle G., Slick Willie, and the rest of the boys on skid row have given up cleaning motorists' windshields at the

intersection of Houston Street and the Bowery and instead have formed the Boweryfest Early Music Singers, an alcoholic a cappella vocal group that specializes in medieval student drinking songs. The Bowery songsters have staked out a stretch of Houston Street's median strip as their performing turf, regaling the captive audience of motorists during red lights. A spring concert series is planned....

...Contemporary folk artist Una Tindall of Leipzig, Iowa, has finally been recognized

as an important American primitivist. The ninety-one-year-old great-grandmother, who has lived in the small farming community most of her life, has been crocheting her distinctive tractor and combine cozies, with their decorative hate motifs, for nearly forty years. The cozies were originally intended for family and neighbors as a way of protecting valuable farm machinery during the cold Midwestern winters. Word eventually spread of Tindall's naive depiction of such themes as the "Fluoridation Threat" and the "Zionist Conspiracy," and after her





# Bureau of Ridicule Standards



DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY UPDATE 1/15/91

The following are the new Degree of Difficulty ratings as formulated by the Bureau of Ridicule Standards. As always, the Degree of Difficulty is to be used as one factor in judging the freshness of a particular joke, according to the formula:

$$\text{ORIGINALITY OF BARB} \times \text{DEGREE OF DIFFICULTY} + .5 (\text{DELIVERY}) = \text{FUNNISS}$$

Use of the formula shows that even stupid jokes will benefit from the selection of targets of advanced Degrees of Difficulty, as in the following example ("Delivery" factor not applicable):

"We send Canada baseball and what do we get in return? Peter Jennings."

**Originality of Barb = 1.5**  
**Degree of Difficulty, Peter Jennings = 4.3**  
**Funniness = 6.45**

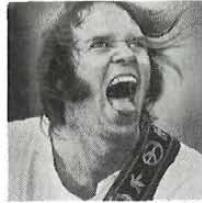
## DEGREES OF DIFFICULTY



Quincy Jones—2.83



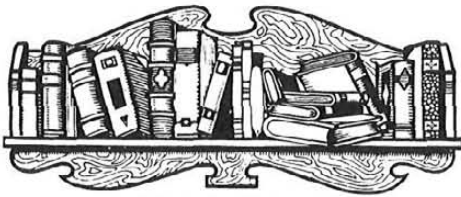
Peter Jennings—4.30



Neil Young—5.13



Cynthia Ozick—6.01



## OVERDUE AT THE NIXON LIBRARY

**Edie, Jean Stein, edited with George Plimpton**  
**The Rector of Justin, Louis Auchincloss**  
**Berlin Stories, Christopher Isherwood**  
**Big Tits and Flaming Crashes, vol. xxi**

**#553 COMPLETE SET 792 TOPPS MAJOR LEAGUE CAPITALIST CARDS (Current Year Only)**  
 ALL THE WEALTH-PRODUCING INDUSTRIALISTS AND YOUR FAVORITE ROBBER BARONS, INCLUDING J. P. MORGAN, JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER, SR., AND HENRY FORD. INCLUDES JOSEPH PATRICK KENNEDY ROUNDIE CARD. SEND 70,000 COMICS TO BOX 111, WALL STREET, NEW YORK.

"Aryan Pastoral" series museum curators and gallery owners began acquiring the pieces from local farmers. A documentary about the life of the self-taught artist, *Hater in the Heartland: A Portrait of Una Tindall*, brought further attention, helping to establish her in the popular imagination. Today her earliest pieces are much sought-after by collectors, and the Museum of American Folk Art is organizing a retrospective exhibition of her work....

**Mark Linn**

## FOREST FIRE A National Lampoon Budget Action Comedy Screenplay

**Starring** Ned Beatty as Charles Murdoch, a DEA agent; Charles Durning as Chester Murdoch, owner of a local sawmill; and Susan Sarandon as Wanda, an environmental activist.

**EXT. Woods near Yakima, Washington. Day.**

CHARLES and CHESTER come upon WANDA chained to an ancient tree.

WANDA: Your men came to cut this tree down, Chester. But I guess I changed their minds.

CHESTER: But I don't even own

this part of the forest.

CHARLES: I'll change your mind, little lady, if you get in my way.

CHARLES moves toward WANDA but CHESTER instinctively knocks him down. He runs over to WANDA and unchains her. Both of them drag CHARLES to the tree and chain him to it.

WANDA: Groovy—it's about time he bonded with nature.

CHESTER: I don't get it. Why would Charles want to cut down his part of the family forest?

WANDA: I've been trying to tell you all week, Chester. He's been using the lumber to finance his crack ring in New

York City.

CHESTER: Geez. I guess we've all learned a little something this week.

WANDA: I guess we have. Sorry I hit you that time.

CHESTER: I guess I had it coming.

WANDA: I guess we both did. They smile, and walk hand in hand to CHARLES's motorcycle. CHESTER gets on. Then WANDA gets on backwards so that she faces CHESTER. They laugh. The camera stays with them as they drive off. Sex is implied.

Roll CREDITS.



**Whitney Houston: I'm Your Baby Tonight** (Arista) 10663  
**Jane's Addiction: Ritual de lo Habitual** (Warner Bros.) 10020  
**Clint Black: Killin' Time** (RCA) 01112



**Jon Bon Jovi: Blaze of Glory** (Mercury) 44490  
**Bell Biv DeVoe: Poison** (MCA) 00547  
**Johnny Gill** (Motown) 00738  
**Tommy James & The Shondells: Anthology** (Rhino) 44185  
**AC/DC: Back In Black** (Atlantic) 13772  
**Don Henley: The End Of The Innocence** (Geffen) 01064  
**Eagles: Greatest Hits, Vol. 1 (Asylum)** 23481  
**Lorrie Morgan: Leave The Light On** (RCA) 01111  
**Soul II Soul: Vol. II-1990-A New Decade** (Virgin) 00567  
**Damn Yankees** (Warner Bros.) 14852

**TWIN SETS** Double the music Count as one!

**Kenny G: Live** (Arista) 64505  
**U2: Rattle And Hum** (Island) 00596  
**Barry Manilow: Live On Broadway** (Arista) 24805  
**The Who: Who's Better, Who's Best** (MCA) 00790  
**The Beach Boys: Made In U.S.A.** (Capitol) 64143  
**Simon & Garfunkel: The Concert In Central Park** (Warner Bros.) 44006  
**Jimi Hendrix: Electric Ladyland** (Reprise) 23362

**Faith No More: The Real Thing** (Reprise) 63719  
**Travis Tritt: Country Club** (Warner Bros.) 60195  
**En Vogue: Born To Sing** (Atlantic) 14187  
**Cher: Heart Of Stone** (Geffen) 42874

**Best of Eric Clapton: Time Pieces** (Polydor) 23385  
**Neville Brothers: Brother's Keeper** (A&M) 63513  
**Duke Ellington Orch.: Digital Duke** (GRP) 63356

**John Williams/Boston Pops: Pops In Space** (Phillips) 05392  
**Pat Metheny: Question And Answer** (Geffen) 73522  
**Milli Vanilli: Girl You Know It's True** (Arista) 01048

**Lionel Richie: The Composer** (Motown) 24700  
**Bryan Adams: Reckless** (A&M) 51540  
**Huey Lewis & The News: Sports** (Chrysalis) 44448  
**Harper Brothers: Remembrance** (Verve) 14896

**Fleetwood Mac: Behind The Mask** (Warner Bros.) 43766  
**Garth Brooks** (Capitol) 33983  
**Allman Bros. Band: Eat A Peach** (Polydor) 63353  
**Glenn Miller Orch.: In The Digital Mood** (GRP) 43293

**Sawyer Brown: Greatest Hits** (Capitol/Curb) 43412  
**Dino: Swingin'** (Island) 43498  
**Grateful Dead: Built To Last** (Arista) 72230  
**Air Supply: Greatest Hits** (Arista) 34424

**Anne Murray: Greatest Hits** (Capitol) 63530  
**Vixen: Rev It Up** (EMI) 54615  
**Spyro Gyra: Fast Forward** (GRP) 00829  
**Bob James: Grand Piano Canyon** (Warner) 04899  
**The Cure: Disintegration** (Elektra) 01109

**Nelson: After The Rain** (DGC) 74079  
**Keith Whitley: Greatest Hits** (RCA) 10728  
**Dionne Warwick Sings Cole Porter** (Arista) 53326  
**Kentucky Headhunters: Pickin' On Nashville** (Mercury) 24740

**Lita Ford: Siletto** (RCA) 63893  
**Alabama: Pass It On Down** (RCA) 00531  
**Eric Clapton: Journeyman** (Warner Bros.) 53940

**Chicago: Greatest Hits 1982-89** (Reprise) 63363  
**Norrington: Beethoven, Symphony No. 9 (Choral)** (Angel) 00467  
**Doobie Bros.: Cycles** (Capitol) 73187  
**Jeff Lynne: Armchair Theatre** (Reprise) 00803

**Traveling Wilburys: Vol. One** (Wilbury) 00711  
**Tom Petty: Full Moon Fever** (MCA) 33911  
**George Harrison: Best Of Dark Horse** (Dark Horse) 80307



**Garth Brooks: No Fences** (Capitol) 73266  
**The Bobby Darin Story** (ATCO) 62521  
**Kathy Mattea: A Collection Of Hits** (Mercury) 10791  
**Steppenwolf: 16 Greatest Hits** (MCA) 13453  
**Suzanne Vega: Days Of Open Hand** (A&M) 00540  
**Patty Loveless: Honky Tonk Angel** (MCA) 01037  
**Najee: Tokyo Blue** (EMI) 44482  
**Dread Zeppelin: Un-led-Ed** (IRS) 63594

**Poison: Flesh & Blood** (Capitol) 50207  
**Boggie Down Productions: Edutainment** (Jive) 63675  
**Guy's Next Door** (SBK) 54272

**Kenny Rogers' Greatest Hits** (Liberty) 50019  
**The B-52's: Cosmic Thing** (Reprise) 14742  
**Fleetwood Mac: Greatest Hits** (Warner Bros.) 00796  
**Patsy Cline: 12 Greatest Hits** (MCA) 53849

**Blue Murder** (Geffen) 01050  
**Marcus Roberts: Deep In The Shed** (Novus) 73646  
**Sandi Patti: The Finest Moments** (Word) 24761  
**Atlantic Records' Hit Singles** (1958-77) (Atlantic) 10514

**Tina Turner: Foreign Affair** (Capitol) 32900  
**Carly Simon: My Romance** (Arista) 24824  
**Fine Young Cannibals: The Raw And The Cooked** (I.R.S.) 01068  
**Dirty Dancing/ Soundtrack** (RCA) 82522

**Bon Jovi: New Jersey** (Mercury) 00516  
**Best of Dire Straits: Money For Nothing** (Warner Bros.) 00713  
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**Tanya Tucker: Tennesse Woman** (Capitol) 54399  
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# GILBERT GOTTFRIED'S PAGE

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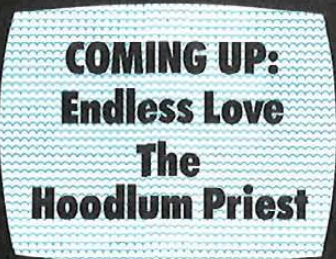
// Is the 6 the month or the time? 57 can't be the day. //

// Please put *Beauty and the Beast* back on the air... //

**THE 24-HOUR BORN LOSER CHANNEL**



**THE 24-HOUR DON MURRAY CHANNEL**



**THE 24-HOUR FLOSSING CHANNEL**



// Ah, she was a dyke anyway.... //

**COMING UP:**  
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**The Hoodlum Priest**

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// Boy, you really got scalped, the left side is too short, you look like Sid Vicious... //

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**THE 24-HOUR DORK CHANNEL**



// Well, I do like you, but I'm weak now — you know, emotionally, and my last relationship was very... //

// ...It was the most fun I ever had on a movie set. It was a real learning experience. The crew was like one big family, very supportive.... //

// ...And in the second season, Mr. Spock was... //

Photographs by Arlene Gottfried

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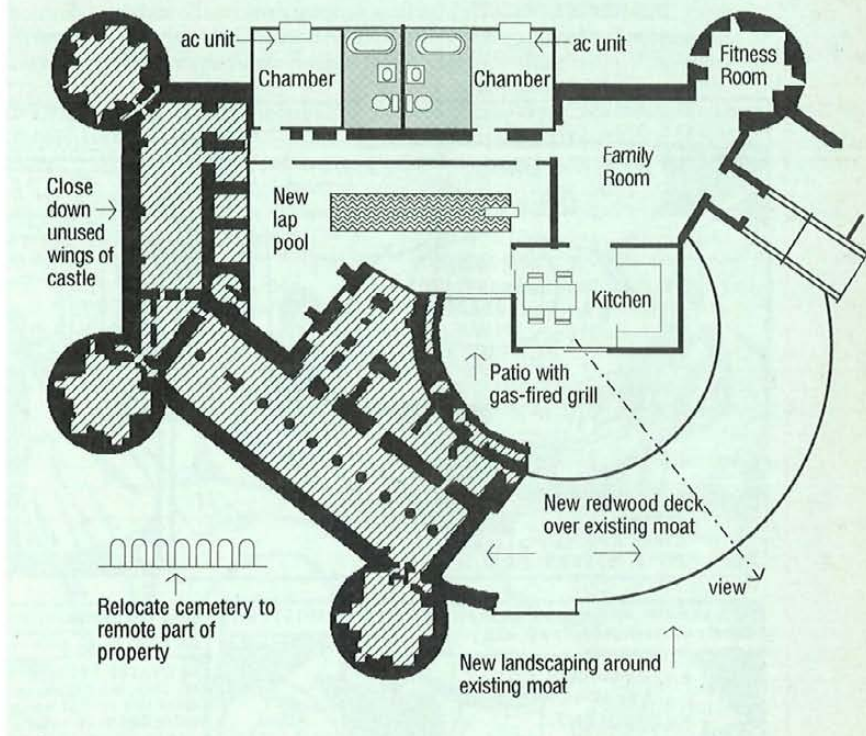
by Richard Lavenstein

**PROBLEMS**

Because the design problems at Elsinore are so extensive and involve varying degrees of severity, for the sake of clarity I will isolate only those that are most troublesome.

1. Poor circulation, including numerous confusing and seemingly endless corridors, along with redundant means of vertical access. No consideration of safe egress for large crowds and flagrant disregard of fire-code requirements. Besides the clear legal risks, even in a monarchical state, in this situation there are obvious emotional consequences. Hamlet suffers from chronic indecision and nervous debility (often recognized by design professionals as "aisle ailment"), while the other residents suffer a generalized sense of anxiety due largely to a morbid concern for their own physical safety.
2. Inadequate illumination throughout the castle. Hazardously low lighting levels set a mood of relentless gloom while adding to existing mental stress. Almost all entry areas are nearly pitch-dark, requiring incessant calls for identification ("Who's there?"); and simple tasks like dressing are almost impossible under such conditions.
3. No consideration given to basic heating and cooling requirements, or HVAC. Failure to address climatic issues leads, at Elsinore, as at many other residences, to extreme suffering and even derangement. (Ophelia: "O heat, dry up my brains!")
4. Plan of kitchen and general food-preparation area missing or so distant from main portion of castle as to be useless. Lack of nourishment and inability to be properly fed lead to hypoglycemia, rash gulping of questionable fluids, and skewed

**Proposed Redesign of Elsinore Castle**



sense of appropriate cuisine. (Ophelia: "There's fennel for you, and columbines." Hamlet: "Would you drink up vinegar? eat a crocodile?")

5. Poor relationship of inside to outside with little thought given to outdoor spaces, general landscaping, or sensible distance to neighboring streams and graveyards. Inadequately planned water elements in garden result in drowning and associated distress. Questionable convenience of graveyard gives rise to heightened morbidity in Hamlet and encourages pointless ruminations on tediously unanswerable questions. Exhumations from graveyard site carry additional health risks.

Resale of the castle, at this stage, is out of the question.

**SOLUTIONS**

First, cut down on the circuitous corridors, possibly closing a wing or two in the tower sections. While making clear economic sense, it would also force the group to become more close-knit and thus might deter the frequent flights to distant corners of the house where chicanery and intrigue seem to flourish. Then, add private baths for all the bedrooms, so that if heat is going to be a continuing problem at

least allow for a cool tub for soaking. This will ease tempers while soothing Hamlet's whips and scorns of time. Next, relocate in a central location an airy eat-in kitchen where food preparation can be a clearly seen and understandable task and where Hamlet's boyish appetite may be easily satisfied. Why make a trip to the pantry such a metaphysical burden? Along with new lighting throughout, the removal of all improperly placed arras, a new paint scheme and furnishings (all of which are too detailed to review here), one should add a terrace and/or wraparound redwood deck. It is good to remember that while turrets are attractive from a distance, they're hardly useful for a true get-together.

We all know that Hamlet is miserable, and he, his friends, and his family are in constant despair (and most end up dead). How often their physical environment is overlooked as the true cause of their sad case, and yet the evidence is all around them for us to see. In comparison to the anguish and disorder at Elsinore, doesn't that long-put-off remodeling job seem a small price to pay for emotional happiness?

Next month in this column: Roofing problems at the House of the Seven Gables.



# SHOW TRIAL



THIS MONTH'S DEFENDANT: Jay Lumiere

THIS MONTH'S CHARGES: Mindless acquiescence in the stylistic commodification of the people's history and culture, including, but not limited to, Third World culture; and a further generalized complicity in the smug dehumanization of our emotional and imaginative selves.

EVEN THE SIMPLEST PLEASURE EXPERIENCED UNDIALECTICALLY CAN HAVE DIRE CONSEQUENCES!



THE POSTURING FOOL! IT WAS NOT AUTHENTIC LATINO MUSIC AT ALL. JUST A CLEVER BRICOLAGE!

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ONCE THE DAMNING EVIDENCE HAS BEEN GATHERED, THE SHOW TRIAL CAN BEGIN... AND WHAT DID YOUR SON SAY NEXT, MRS. LUMIERE?



THE SHOW TRIAL RECONVENES AND A CONTRITE DEFENDANT CONFESSES HIS CRIMES....



THE PURE AND CLEAN VISION OF OUR EXALTED IDEOLOGY IS AFFIRMED. ONCE MORE A MALEFACTOR IS MADE TO DRINK DEEP FROM THE STEIN OF NATIONAL LAMPOON JUSTICE!



# SEMIOTICALLY YOURS

by Philip Scher

In a recent exploration of humanist discourse, the Saussurian linguist Emile Van der Pol has elucidated a framework through which it is possible to view sociolinguistic patterns in both historically relevant and politically viable terms. The system, which he calls Hanged Analysis, after the medieval image of the Hanged Man on tarot cards who swings suspended by one foot, is a method by which popular cultural analysts can decipher certain cultural codes through the inversion of superficial meanings. This inversion, like the Hanged Man, results in the effective death of one meaning and the creation of a deeper understanding which, obviously, sprouts from the corpse.

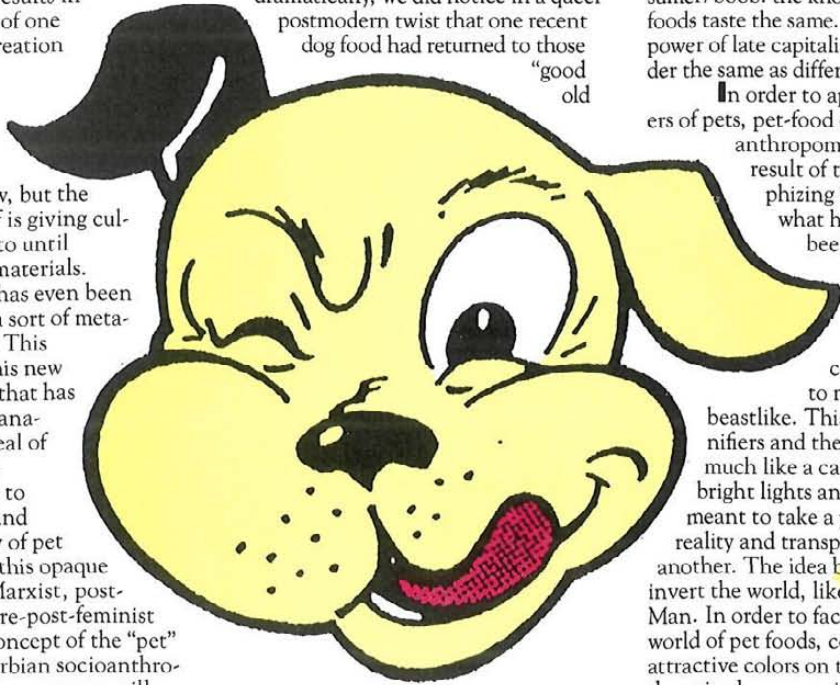
Hanged Analysis is still new, but the application thereof is giving cultural critics access to until recently obscured materials. (Hanged Analysis has even been applied to itself in a sort of meta-Hanged Analysis.) This paper will utilize this new method on a topic that has presented cultural analysts with a great deal of difficulty: pet food.

We will try to present a Hanged and deconstructed view of pet food, and open up this opaque discourse in post-Marxist, post-structuralist, and pre-post-feminist terms. Using the concept of the "pet" made famous by Serbian socioanthropologist Andrej Czezxeww, we will reinvest the notion with meta-concepts of nutrition, presentation, and availability. In other words, we will "feed" the "Pet."

Thanks to a grant from the American Foundation for Intentionally Unexplored and Easily Dismissed Cultural Questions, we were able to visit the local grocery store for direct field research. What emerged was the gradual codification, a taxonomy if you will, of pet foods—their slogans and advertising techniques as well as their varieties. (It should be noted here that due to the size of the grant we were only able to make one trip to the store and we found ourselves restricted to dogs and cats.) Further research was done intradomically through television monitoring, gauging pet-food commercials, etc.

The conclusions drawn from this semiotic analysis of pet food seem to reach beyond the post-structuralist project into a space as yet occupied only by the most advanced theories in chaos physics. We might be proud to call our theory absurd.

The earliest pet-food slogan extant is Mrs. Crawford's Good Food for Dogs copy, which appeared in *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1938. Simple, it read: "Keep those dogs alive, feed them." Although slogans have changed dramatically, we did notice in a queer postmodern twist that one recent dog food had returned to those "good old



days" in its slogan: "Dogs live on dog food, always have, always will." More interesting, however, is the way in which modern pet-food advertising must appeal to those trends that directly affect the owners.

During the go-go eighties America engendered a hermeneutics of wealth and power gone haywire. In this period pet foods with names like Sheba, Fancy Feast, and Pedigree emerged. Even if your pet was mangy and worm-filled, he or she could eat like human royalty. And even if you were mangy and worm-filled, your pets could eat like royalty. Sheba boasted "tender meaty chunks" (for cats), Pedigree offered your dog a banquet in any flavor. Whiskas added a new twist when it renamed the sticky gel that comes inside every can of pet food. For other

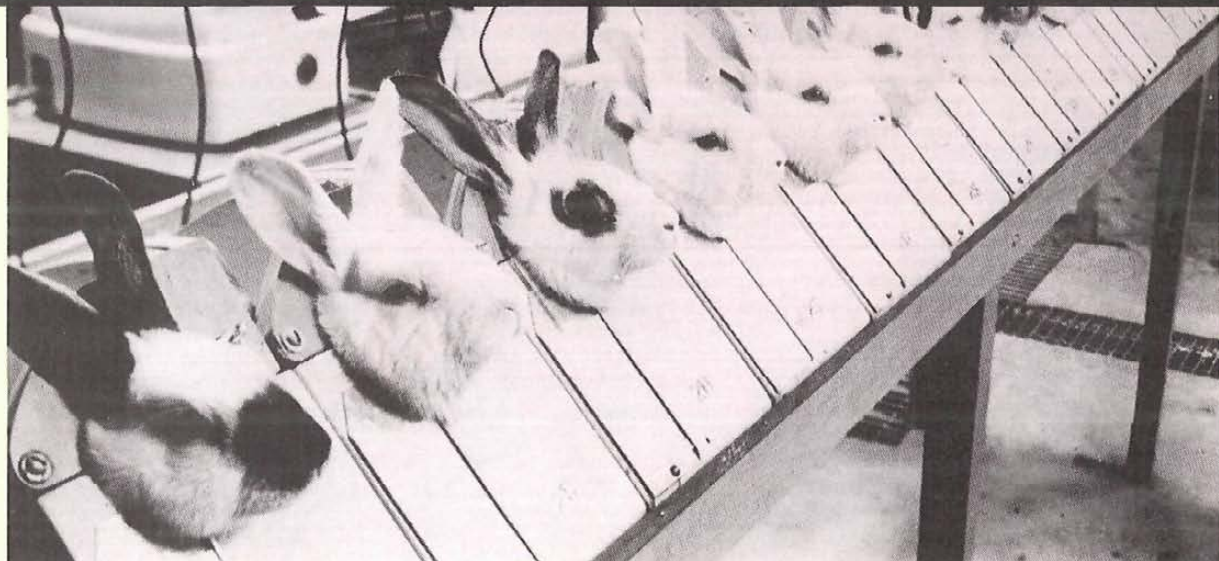
brands it was the sticky gel, for Whiskas it was *aspic*. Words such as *savory*, *tender*, *exquisite*, *palatable*, *moist*, *juicy*, *robust* were applied to pet foods. In addition to these types of descriptions, one could find cans that boasted a whole meal type. Examples of this are: Southern-style dinner; sliced veal and carrots; hearty stew; lobster thermidor with scalloped potatoes, leeks, and white wine. It is here that semiotic analytical tools are most valuable. Equipped with a theoretical perspective, the semiotician has a distinct edge over the decentered bourgeois consumer/boob: the knowledge that all pet foods taste the same. It is the great power of late capitalist ideology to render the same as different (different).

In order to appeal to the owners of pets, pet-food companies need to anthropomorphize pets. The result of this anthropomorphizing is the confusion of what has historically been constituted as "natural." The current trend to make animals human has as its converse the trend to make humans beastlike. This inversion of signifiers and their signifieds acts much like a carnival in which bright lights and costumes are meant to take a person from one reality and transport him into another. The idea behind this is to invert the world, like the Hanged Man. In order to facilitate this in the world of pet foods, companies use attractive colors on their packages; they give human voices to cats (Morris) and superhuman powers to dogs (Mighty Dog). The equivalent in human society is to reduce humankind to its most bestial state, as in Rambo, in which a human being is given a dialogue of grunts, long hair, and sweat. It is the Alpo-Rambo continuum.

Thankfully, we see this trend disappearing. The seductive appeal of a four-legs-good, two-legs-bad discourse has disappeared dramatically in the wake of television programs about simulated quislings and their sexually frustrated girlfriends. All of which points to a re-return of the hyperreal master narrative, devoid of referents, operating outside the logic of representation, and impervious to subversion, a narrative in which dog eats dog and those in search of meaning go hungry. ■

# STOP THE MADNESS!!!

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AP/Wide World

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**ITEM:** The leading celebrity magazine shaved the fur off fifty-one baby otters and attached sensors that measured galvanic skin responses to a series of photos of such stars as Roseanne Barr, Madonna, and Danny Aiello. The magazine had planned its next six months of covers, but the hapless otters began exhibiting severe stress syndromes and abnormal feeding patterns.

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nothin',  
He just keeps rollin' along.

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cotton,  
He don't plant okra, he don't plant alfalfa,  
He don't plant asparagus, he don't plant  
bananas,  
He don't plant—well, corn, say—how  
could he, he's a river,  
He don't plant—what are those things you  
cross with oranges, which he doesn't  
plant, by the way, no oranges—oh  
right, tangelos, he don't plant tangelos,  
He don't raise chickens, and he doesn't  
have a mink farm,

And he doesn't have any pets, and he's  
never gone in for dogs, not even push  
toy dogs you don't have to feed or walk,  
No, he's too busy, very very busy rollin'  
along.

And to give him credit he does stock fish  
and lost wedding rings and drowned  
careless people and all the flotsam and  
jetsam and driftwood and the tears  
flooding from either bank and the  
moon's trapped reflection,  
And he don't plant time capsules or  
suspicion in people's minds,  
Or avocados.

He just keeps rollin' along.

Mark O'Donnell

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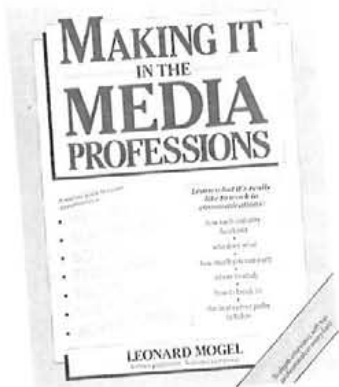
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Agency Account Exec.	Books Acquisition Ed.
Magazine Ad Director	Screenwriter
Copywriter	Story Analyst
Literary Agent	City Editor
Photojournalist	Foreign Correspondent
Casting Director	Talent Agent
Art Director	Advt. Media Buyer
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# WHEN WE SAY COMEDY, WE MEAN BUSINESS

**W**ARS, DEPRESSIONS, MALAISES: surely God is angry. But even God has a soft spot for funny business. Joke production is skyrocketing, every third citizen can do a passable imitation of Gilbert Gottfried, and laughter is as common as pennies. We may all be dying, but we're still the funniest nation on the planet, a country fueled by a thousand million mouths, grotesquely twisted with laughter, by hot furnace-bellow guffaws raising the hair on our necks, by the thunderous reverberations of great rolling belly laughs.

**S**O as we stare out across that burning lake of humor, out to the shores where mighty turbines endlessly power the production of funniness that keeps us great, we salute you, Comedy Industry. From the poorly lighted stages of small-town comedy clubs to the glamorous glitz of Hollywood awards shows, the sound of millions of chuckles, giggles, guffaws, gasps, and chortles—the never-ceasing repetition of the same jokes and premises and situations—reminds us that it is indeed humor, not work, that makes us strong. ■



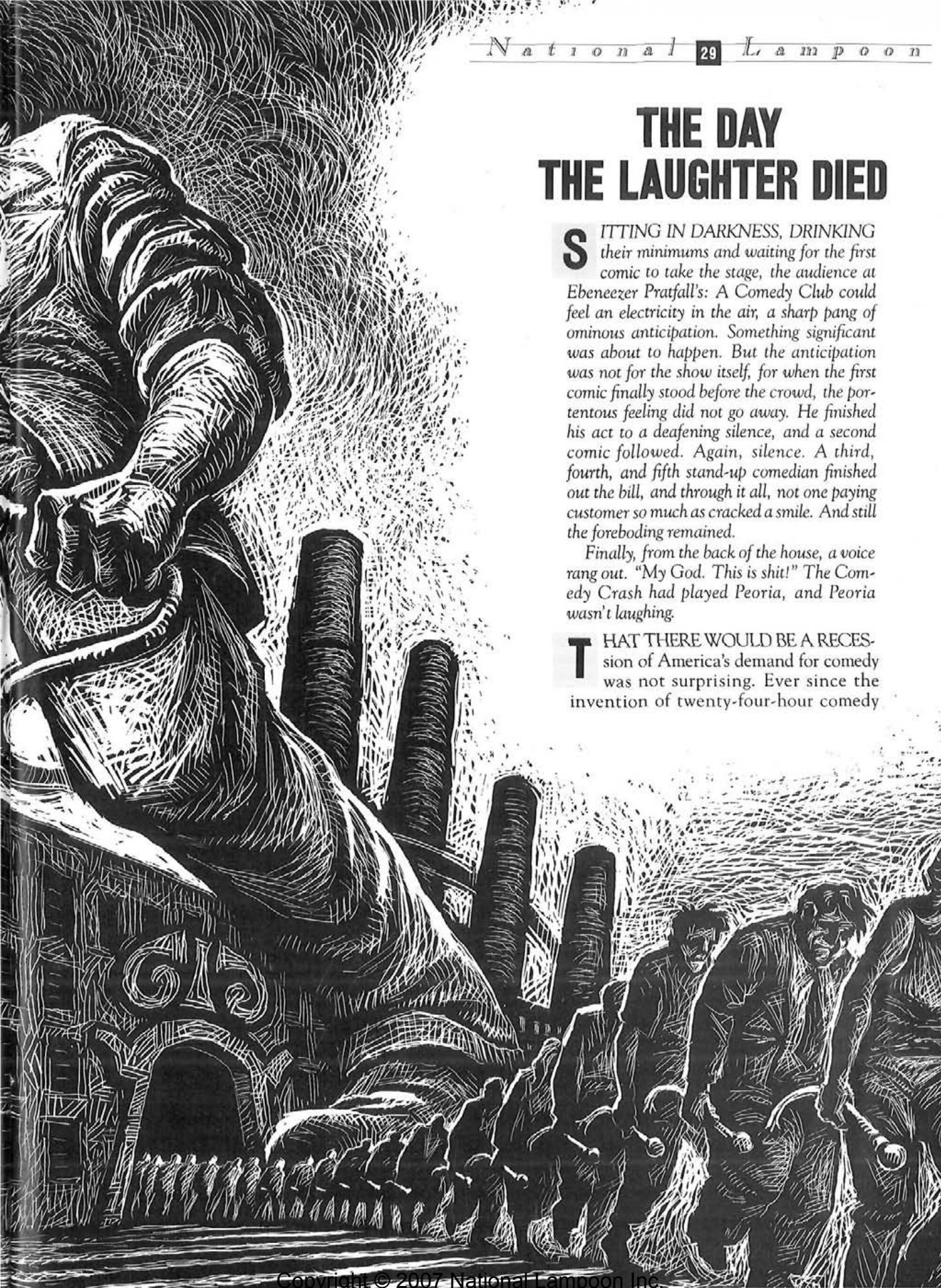
Phil Foster.

## THE DAY THE LAUGHTER DIED

**S**ITTING IN DARKNESS, DRINKING their minimums and waiting for the first comic to take the stage, the audience at Ebenezer Pratzfall's: A Comedy Club could feel an electricity in the air, a sharp pang of ominous anticipation. Something significant was about to happen. But the anticipation was not for the show itself, for when the first comic finally stood before the crowd, the portentous feeling did not go away. He finished his act to a deafening silence, and a second comic followed. Again, silence. A third, fourth, and fifth stand-up comedian finished out the bill, and through it all, not one paying customer so much as cracked a smile. And still the foreboding remained.

Finally, from the back of the house, a voice rang out. "My God. This is shit!" The Comedy Crash had played Peoria, and Peoria wasn't laughing.

**T**HAT THERE WOULD BE A RECESSION of America's demand for comedy was not surprising. Ever since the invention of twenty-four-hour comedy



## THE COMEDY CRASH—LOOKING FOR ANSWERS

As the nation struggles to cope with the day-to-day effects of last week's Comedy Crash, experts are still trying to learn what caused it. A drastic change in public taste and a glut of jokes followed by decreased joke values are thought to be major contributing factors. But what triggered these events, and how could they have been allowed to get so far out of hand?

According to the president's Emergency Fact-Finding Commission on the Comedy Crash, four new theories stand out:

### HUMOR DEPLETION ALLOWANCE

—This theory holds that, just as oil companies deliberately created their own oil shortage in the 1970s to drive up prices, debt-laden comedy conglomerates such as Time Warner and Capital Cities/ABC induced an artificial humor downturn in order to prop up the price structure of comedy during the current recession. However, this controlled manipulation set off an unforeseen panic and an irreversible comedy slide. Ironically, under existing tax laws, many of the large conglomerates may stand to gain more from short-selling humor than from actually being funny.

### EUROPEAN ECONOMIC COMMUNITY '92

—While Americans have always been avid consumers of European humor (e.g., Monty Python, Benny Hill, and Inspector Clouseau), the Continent has almost completely weaned itself from American imports. This "cold comedy shoulder" has grown especially severe since the European free-market unification in 1992. With the phenomenal success of such European export comedy programs as *Tirez mon doigt!*, *Der Wigwe Jude*, and *Los Pimientos Morrones*, the previously unassailable American comedy business has been badly shaken.



In New York, laughs turned to ashes at a Billy Crystal charity benefit.

AP/Wide World

channels in 1989, there had been warnings that no boom was permanent. And yet the nation continued to gorge itself on gags, premises, and high concepts, letting itself in for a real shock: Black Saturday Night, the opening act of a catastrophic comedy crash whose aftershocks are still being felt not only in the entertainment industry, but in the daily life of the nation as well.

As recently as ten days ago, it was possible for an average American to wake to comedy radio, read Gannett's "comedy daily," *The Funny*, over breakfast, arrive at work and find last night's Letterman jokes e-mailed from Wall Street, eat lunch to stand-up in the company cafeteria (a fashionable corporate practice taken up even by IBM), and spend the evening viewing comedy movies, clubs, or television programming. Socially, humor played an even more significant role. The joke had replaced the handshake as a form of greeting, and was such a crucial component of the nation's sexual life that Tony Dalbert, founder of the humor-ghostwriting business "Cupid's Pickup," had made \$150 million in two years with his "personalized date patter system."

With good reason, then, last Saturday dawned with high expectations. The highly publicized "Comedy War" between the MTV- and HBO-generated comedy channels was in full swing and pulling in millions of dollars in ad revenues. Warner Brothers had gone to huge expense promoting its groundbreaking "Jim Belushi Triple Premiere" of *Camel Cops*, *Ghost Cadet*, and *The Subatomic Patrolmen*. And NBC was opening a new season of *Saturday Night Live* with an all-day "SNL-athon" featuring sketches, monologues, and parody commercials enacted by the estimated 1,500 living cast

members. By evening, however, expectation was turning to panic.

At a Minneapolis nightclub that billed itself as "the home of comedy," patrons rioted when fifteen successive comics failed to produce one laugh. Spilling out onto the streets, the melee spread to thirty-seven other comedy bars in a three-block area known as Funny Town. As reports hit the news services, similar riots broke out across the country, not only at comedy clubs but at movie theaters and playhouses as well. In Jerry's Corners, New York, twenty-seven people were seriously injured when Cardinal Ed Clark High School was set afire during a drama-club performance of *You Can't Take It with You*. Meanwhile, the Triple Premiere was canceled halfway through *Camel Cops* when only Jim Belushi showed up for the screening, while the "Comedy War" waged by HA! and the Comedy Channel went unwatched. Like a Pacific tsunami, the Crash was upon us, and there was nothing to do but run for cover.

"We were literally caught with our pants down," said Comedy Channel analyst Brenda Hamilton, "running a segment about humorous boxer shorts. We thought things were going just great. Then someone came into the control booth shouting, 'Pull the show!' We punched up an old cancer thing with James Caan. But by then it was too late."

By 8:45 P.M. on Saturday, all major networks had pulled their regularly scheduled programs and replaced them with continuous news coverage of what Tom Brokaw called Black Saturday Night: the Great Comedy Crash.

**O**NE after another, the helicopters landed on the White House lawn. Out of them stepped the wide-ranging group of experts called by



the president to assess the impact of Saturday's events: John Kenneth Galbraith, Zbigniew Brzezinski, Casey Kasem, Paul Volcker, The Belz, and many others. The president had canceled the rest of his schedule, including a state dinner with Sweden's King Wilbur and a foreign-policy speech to be delivered at the National Cheese Council's trade fair, in order to discuss the causes and consequences of the Crash.

Late Tuesday afternoon, the group finally emerged from its West Wing deliberations. The president ushered former secretary of state James Baker to the microphone. In a slow, weary drawl, Baker began, "I'm reminded of a funny story. . . ." He paused, and sipped from a clear glass of water. "But it just isn't funny anymore."

**B**Y MONDAY, AS FORMER CARSON writers were spotted drinking Lectric Shave and sporadic bonfires of comedy videos were reported throughout the country, speculation began about the causes of this change of sensibility. Explanations—ranging from Japanese conspiracy to heightened sunspot activity—abound [see sidebar], but most informed opinion centers on two theories:

**JOKE INFLATION.** This theory holds that a huge increase in the number of jokes leads directly to a decrease in the effect each individual joke has; therefore, the humor content of each joke approaches zero. "Actually, it's a gradual process," says Timothy Mueller of the University of Illinois at Second City. "But out of habit, both producers and consumers persuade themselves that humor has retained its 'funniness.' Eventually, of course, its true value is understood. You can only tell someone that a rubber chicken is filet mignon for so long."

Seen this way, the Crash is simply a result of mismanagement: if agents, managers, and producers had slowed comedy's expansion, the inflation and its aftermath could have been avoided. And, indeed, the industry's growth had been almost too dynamic. Most stand-up comedians, hoping to emulate the success of NBC *Nightly News* anchor Jay Leno, performed every day of the year, some even opening for Christmas religious services; and comedy had taken over advertising to such an extent that John Hancock's life insurance campaign, "Always Leave 'Em Laughing," swept the industry's awards last year. (The campaign will be replaced with one called "Somber Ways to Go.")

Detractors claim that the inflation theory does not give enough attention to the demand side, which leads to the second theory: **DRASTIC TASTE SHIFT.** "The mood of the consumer has everything to do with the Crash," says Beryl Sweeney, a professor of American Comedy Studies at Queoihim Valley Community College. "Like all revolutions, it's a surprise, but it's obvious that the comedy-oppressed—and that includes nearly all of us—would want to breathe free of chor-

gles, giggles, and guffaws. Unfortunately, the economic structures we've evolved for the old world suffer. Just think how things would change if we suddenly decided that women with long legs and ample busts were no longer attractive. Fashion, entertainment, advertising—the very fabric of our existence—would be drastically altered. I think that's what's happened with comedy—it just doesn't work for us anymore."

As if to prove the Drastic Taste Shift theory, a new sensibility appears to be everywhere in the wake of the Crash, one that "may realign popularity contests for a generation," in the words of Professor Sweeney. Jennifer Giles, a twenty-seven-year-old salesclerk from Hopsburg, Ohio, is typical. "My boyfriend was the funniest man I've ever met. Consequently, I had to leave him. I don't know where he is now. I don't even care, really. Nobody wants to laugh at dinner parties anymore; we just want to eat."

Indeed, signs of a new earnestness were everywhere in evidence last week. In New York, a debate on the future of Central American policy was moved from a small lecture hall to Madison Square Garden's Felt Forum. The University of Maryland reported that applications for night-school foreign-language courses were at an all-time high. And as Peter Yoder, a church elder in the Amish settlement in New Prussia, Pennsylvania, proclaimed Black Saturday Night an Amish holiday, Nashville songwriter Bug "Junior" Thomas's ballad "Livin' Without the Laughs" went to number three on

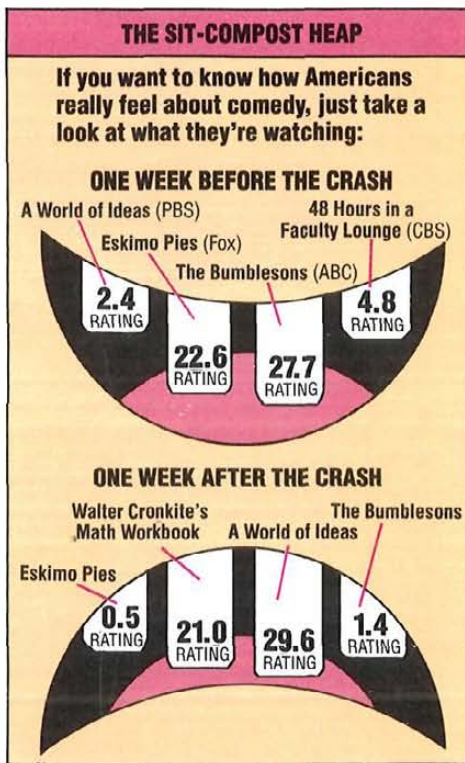
**GLOBAL WARMING**—As early as 1942, scientists asserted that not only was the earth heating up but that too much heat could lead to a permanent dulling of wits in humans. But because proving this theory could only result in permanent wit damage to live subjects, it had never been formally confirmed, and consequently was never a serious issue among environmental activists. But in 1990, independent research groups were documenting huge drops in humor among indigenous peoples living near the Great Ozone Rifts at both poles. "Joking, humorous anecdotes and intentionally silly gestures have all but disappeared from day-to-day life among the formerly playful Inuit," one scientist reported. "Instead, tribesmen complain about the weather, and learn how to make spreadsheets on my desktop computer." Now, it seems, our understanding of global warming and its link to humor may come all too late.

**ERIC BOGOSIAN**—Performance artist Eric Bogosian's unblinkingly acerbic satires have simply seared away the nation's sense of humor. "His is a devastating comedy of corrosion," in the words of cultural arbiter Randolph Mattingly, "breeding a hyperstylized aesthetic, fatally wedded to pleasure as despair, despair as pleasure. After Bogosian, one-liners are clearly one line too many."

## BLACK SATURDAY NIGHT: ONE COMIC'S STORY

by Sally Tedesco

I was the middle act at the Chug and Chuckle in Milwaukee on Black Saturday Night. I was terrified. The opening act had left the stage in tears, and several members of the audience had chased him into the parking lot, demanding that he at least make some funny fart noises to make up for





his lousy set. I got up to do my set just as they returned. Foolishly trying to use the situation, I improvised, "Did you get him to burp too?" The people in the back froze and clenched their fists as the audience fell silent. You couldn't even hear the ice in their glasses clink. I tried to smile and attempted to continue, said how great it was to be back in "wonderful, wild Wisconsin," hoping someone might catch the irony. They knew I was full of shit. They could smell it.

Pressing on, I started my bit about my cat not paying her share of the rent; a woman in the audience suggested my cat would be better entertainment. An angry rumbling began in the audience, and suddenly they were chanting, "We want mimes!" I was caught so off-guard that I actually tried to do some mime. I reached into the depths of my mind and tried to remember the Shields and Yarnell show: the robot thing, the traffic-directing thing. I died a thousand deaths that night.

Then I remember the panic in the headliner's eyes as he pulled me behind the bar and told me that the entire comedy market had crashed moments before I had gone on. I was shocked. The entire North American market had crashed! I was horrified at my sudden, tragic unemployment, yet I was strangely relieved that it wasn't just me.

Well, the Chug and Chuckle lost so much money that night they sold my bus ticket back home to a customer for the cash. I had to hitch a ride to Pittsburgh, where I sold my T-shirts from now-defunct comedy clubs as collector's items so I could get bus fare back to New York.

Most of the hot comedy spots have already closed down. They're now video-rental stores: in fact, many of the clerks are former comics. The remaining clubs now only book animal acts, hypnotists, and poetry readings.

the country-western charts just days after its release:

*Spread the word—the grin is gone  
Let's buckle down and carry on.  
It's goodbye Hee Haw  
H'lo MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour  
Gonna grow again  
Like a roadside flower.  
Got work to do, let's get right to it  
Don't need a clown laughin' while we do it.*

**A** COLD WIND BLOWS THROUGH the streets of Hopsburg, Ohio, and past the plate-glass window of Neil Braden's barber-shop. Inside, Braden, a sixty-four-year-old lifelong resident of Hopsburg, talks in short bursts between scissor clips as he gives a visitor a trim.

*"Time was, a fella'd come down here as much to joke around and chew the fat as get his hair cut. I might get off some good ones, then old Charlie'd come right back with a couple more. Maybe I'd pretend I was making to give some fella a crew cut, or slice his neck with a straight-edge—you know, just fun and playful like. You see, I wouldn't really do it. It'd just be pretend. But now I keep it all business—'Short on the sides, Gil?' or 'Block the back, Jim?' If I have a funny thought these days, I feel like... like I guess there's something wrong with me."*

*Neil steps away from the barber chair and looks out the window at the somber street. Silently, he brushes the back of his hand across his eyes.*

**E**FFECTS OF THE CRASH HAVE HAD an impact on every aspect of American society, and many analysts feel there are still unforeseen repercussions ahead. For now, the nation's businesses are laboring around the clock to adapt to a new ahumorous America, and the change is proving to be much easier for some than for others.

"Almost all TV comedy is just packaging anyway," notes television executive Jack Edison. "Even a top show like *Cosby*, folks only laugh 'cause they've been told it's a sitcom. So the answer is simple—repackage. Take out the laugh track, add some weird music, and boom—they're not sitcoms anymore, they're 'non-naturalistic family dramas.' Things are still funny, but now they're funny strange, not funny ha-ha."

But other comedy programs have been cheaper to scrap than to rework. HBO's Comedy Channel—now calling itself Channel 31—fired its writers and underwent a complete gutting of regular programs. In their place, Channel 31 ran old episodes of *Face the Nation*, *Firing Line*, and *Tony Brown's Journal* as it scrambled to create original news programming and nature shows. Likewise, the movie industry—a culture largely founded on comedy—is similarly scrambling to adjust (current rumors, for example, have Dan Aykroyd and John Candy starring in a remake of *The Paul Robeson Story*). Paramount Pictures canceled all production of

comedy feature movies (nearly 90 percent of total production), and began a rigorous reformation centered on coming-of-age movies and tales of human courage.

But for other businesses in America—small comedy-related enterprises from strip-agrams to bumper-sticker factories—the last joy buzzer has sounded. Casualties include workers like Jackie Delfino, who works at a novelty-poster factory in Alabama. "I shed a tear when the last 'Complaint Square—Write Legibly' poster rolled off the assembly line," said Delfino. "I don't know what I'll do now. Natural forces, maybe."

To the few remaining comedy-industry workers, and to the small handful of hard-pressed comedy buffs, the question of when comedy will reemerge from the basements and humor safe houses across the land is an urgent one. Opinions vary. Joke-inflationists feel that the Crash is just a temporary variance in the "comedy cycle." "Currently, we've produced all the comedy we need—the country's inventories are at an all-time high," says Timothy Mueller. "But after enough time spent not making jokes, even a quip about somebody's tie will seem hilarious and be rewarded accordingly. Furthermore, if comedy manufacturers can take this opportunity to innovate, to scrap tired product like celebrity humor or fish-out-of-water sitcoms, then they could turn this thing around quickly."

Not everyone is so optimistic. "I think we're down for a long count," says Professor Sweeney. "But you've got to realize it's not necessarily a bad thing, just a different thing. The days of sophisticated, highly contextual japing are over. You also won't be funny just for remembering the names of the Brady Bunch kids anymore. There'll be no more parodies, no more satires, and no more jokes about shared experiences like watching ads for electronic devices used by old people. Right there you cut out about 80 to 90 percent of commercial-market humor.

"When the smoke has cleared, America is just going to have to relearn how to be funny. I predict that eventually humor will return, probably a grass-roots reemergence in the shape of crude joke forms like the knock-knock or the Johnny Fuckerfaster. But we may be talking thirty or forty years."

Meanwhile, the aftershocks of the Crash continue. Hopsburg, population 11,760, is a typical example. Once the very picture of droll, small-town America, it has been torn apart by the Crash. Gone are the once-wry signs welcoming visitors to Ohio's "City of Checkersboards and Pinochle Decks." Gone are the pranks once perpetrated by Hopsburg High School seniors before every home game—bubble bath in the town fountain, a colorful necktie on the statue of founding father Pierre LaGuy. And gone, most notably, is the humor that used to be so much a part of daily interaction. As barber Neil Braden says, "Joke with



one of my customers? I might as well move my business to Clusterville or Cheddartown—and I sure as hell don't plan to do that."

On any given day, at any time, inside the old Dew Drop Inn—now just called The Bar—a dozen or more Hopsburg Crash victims can be found seeking consolation in each other's company and their bottles. "I'm ruined," laments former high school biology instructor Drew Glandys. "I used to start off every class with a joke—you know, just some kind of ice-breaker to get their attention and tear down the wall between students and teacher. But when I tried it on Monday, I got called on the carpet. 'The Japanese don't waste time on jokes,' the principal said. Now the only ice I'm breaking is the ice in my glass."

"I had a great job," Barney "Doctor Barney" Shepherd adds. "I did weather for Channel 10, had a great bit of business where I'd use pictures of local people's faces to represent different weather patterns. A classic bit. I even got a letter from the big boys at the Comedy Weather Channel asking for a demo tape a while back. Well, it's all gone now, boy, like a stack of cirrus on a windy day."

Others in Hopsburg, however, are coming out ahead. Jeremy Rosen, a chemist and "freelance poet," is one. "I'm not a humorous man, and it used to cost me socially. Now all I have to say is 'I think chemistry is going to be a major growth field' and the women swoon, if

I may say so." John Lucere, an office-supply salesman, has also benefited. "I couldn't wait for the comedy boom to be over with. All the salesmen who did that sarcasm and 'lighter side' stuff were doing really well. I'm glad a firm handshake counts for more than a nudge in the ribs again."



Gus Santos, with reporting by Walter Suh, Derrick Bully, Tanya Leland, Marc Newson, Gina Kirkpatrick, Benjamin Spence, Phyllis Steib, Richard Stempke, Muriel Lopate, Esteban Roundhouse, and Joan Simon-Wooly.

**In Hopsburg, Neil Braden need sharpen his wit no more.**

## The Fellowship Application

Where families live in huts on poles and women dress in sheets and bowls and elephants are lifting logs and people don't mind eating dogs,

I'd like to go, to peep and pry and find out just exactly why they think that they're too fucking good to act like us, the way they should.

## The Savages

The Querandí are a people of uncertain linguistic affiliation on the upper banks of the lower Plata and Paraná rivers.

Do not ask any more about them. I have already said too much.

Mark O'Donnell

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# THE HACK'S A STARTER KIT HANDBOOK:

by Andy  
Kindler

Whoever said, "Dying is easy, comedy is hard" never went to a comedy club! Every night at one of the twelve million clubs (almost one for every sixteen Americans!) across the country, comics of all ages, races, and genders are proving that comedy is easy—if you know the secret.

The secret is:

## Originality is a sucker's game.

Think about it. While "Mr. Creativity" is holed up in a dark room with index cards, struggling to find that perfect joke, the hack (from an Indian word that means "opening act," by the way!) is sitting by the pool drinking mimosas!

## Which comic would YOU rather be?

It's not a difficult question, is it?

Best of all, anyone can be a hack! You don't need special skills. You don't need to invest in tools or uniforms. You don't need a microphone—the club supplies that. You don't even need material—other comics supply that. All you need is the courage to keep going.

And we've helped give you a start with the lessons below. Learn them, and your act will write itself. (Note: the hurried comic can just steal the examples.) Before you know it, you'll be getting laughs—big laughs—for material you thought was tired years ago. And you'll be hacking to your heart's—and wallet's—content.

## BEFORE YOU GET STARTED: A BEGINNER'S TIP

Make sure you have a car in good working order. The comedian who can drive the other comics to the club is a comedian who is assured of working.

## LESSON I: TOPICALITY

You're a comic—that means you're hip and "cutting edge" by your very nature. Make sure you keep it that way with plenty of topical humor culled from today's headlines, or, better still, from the acts of comics who once culled headlines that were once today's.

### A. CELEBRITY TRASHING

Talk about not needing originality! Celebrity trashing proves it. It's the comedic equivalent of shooting fish in a barrel—and it's just as much fun.

**Examples:** • Madonna—like a virgin? I don't think so.

• Can you imagine James Brown and Jim Bakker in jail?—oww!!! I feel good! (See Lesson III A.)

• What does Dr. Ruth know about sex? Stroke the penis, stroke the penis—she can't even reach the penis.

Or, to triple your celebrity output, use the "someone meets someone" formula:

**Examples:** • Dan Quayle—who's that? Pee-wee Herman meets Archie?

• Richard Simmons—who's that? Little Richard meets Liza Minnelli?

**Variation:** • Don King—who's that? Jimi Hendrix meets a toaster?

**Other acceptable celebrities:** Tammy Faye Bakker (makeup, jail), Zsa Zsa Gabor (ditto), Leona Helmsley (ditto), Michael Jackson (effeminacy).

## B. COMMERCIALS

Better known as the "Hack Happy Hunting Grounds."

**Examples:** • "This is your brain. This is your brain on drugs. Any questions?" Yeah, can I get hash browns with that?

• The Clapper—I didn't know Barbara Bush could act.

• Life Alert—"I'm falling and I can't get up!" Who asked you to try walking in the first place?

• These tampon commercials say you can swim, horseback ride, and hike. Who cares? What about sex?

## LESSON II: THE PREMISE

The premise is a surefire laugh-getter that does require some creative participation—but not much, fortunately.

### A. THE ATTITUDE/STEROIDS PREMISE

Anything is funny with an attitude; and just think how funny it would be on steroids.

**Formulas:** • \_\_\_\_\_ is just \_\_\_\_\_ with an attitude.

• \_\_\_\_\_ is just \_\_\_\_\_ on steroids.

**Examples:** • A Hyundai is just a Yugo with an attitude.



- A rock is just a pebble with an attitude.
- A poodle is just a rat on steroids.
- A weightlifter is just a regular guy on steroids.
- Quayle is just Agnew on steroids.

**Advanced example:** ● Steroids are just vitamins with an attitude.

## B. THE DIFFERENCES PREMISE: MAN/WOMAN AND OTHERS

The word's out—some things in everyday life are different from other things in everyday life. And humor lies in those differences. The chief difference, of course, is between men and women:

**Example:** ● Women don't high-five, but men don't exchange recipes.

**Other areas of concentration:** Buying tampons for girlfriend; the length of time women take with makeup/in the ladies' room; shopping; and, for any guy-related joke, this formula:

(Guy-bashing joke) Am I right, ladies?

**Example:** ● Guys are pigs. Am I right, ladies?

Another difference is the one between dogs and cats, and can be summed up: *Dogs will do anything, cats don't care.*

**Example:** ● Cats won't fetch a bone. "You fetch it. I'm getting something to eat. And take away this cheap shit and get me some real food." Dogs will eat lard and Spam!

## C. DICK JOKES (AND OTHER GENITAL HUMOR)

Everyone loves 'em! Use your imagination, or just use these:

- Examples:** ● I'm three inches—of course, width isn't everything.
- I'm three inches—from the floor.
  - She said she wanted a good six inches. I'm not folding it in half for anyone.

Get the idea? And while you're down there, don't forget to take advantage of the "next frontier" in genital humor:

**Example:** ● Condoms? Forget that. I'm climbing into a trash-can liner.

## D. AIRLINE HUMOR

Even if you walk to your gigs, a few airline jokes will let audiences know that you're an on-the-go, hip kind of comic—yet the classic structure shows you've done your vaudeville research:

**Example:** ● I'm not saying the airline was cheap, but folding chairs and card tables?

## E. CAR HUMOR

What more can we say? It's always accepted, always appropriate. Just make sure you don't talk about your Rolls:

- Examples:** ● I have a Hyundai, which is Korean for "piece of shit."
- I have one of those talking cars—it's a Yugo, it says, "Why didn't you buy a real car, moron?"

## LESSON III: RACE, CREED, SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The hack can get big laughs with these jokes, but to stay

out of trouble, remember to state that you're not responsible—it's your character.

## A. BASIC REFERENCES: A LIST

**Gays**—Anal sex; San Francisco; male celebrities in prison; AIDS (for extra punch). An effeminate voice is always a crowd pleaser.

**Examples:** ● Last week I was in San Francisco. I dropped my wallet, and kicked it all the way to Oakland.

● I see you're drinking white wine. What are you, a fag?

**African-Americans**—Large sexual appendages, bad grammar.

**Women**—PMS.

**Iranians**—Work at 7-Eleven; cabdrivers who don't speak English.

**Chinese**—Can't drive.

**Japanese**—Taking over the the country; like to take pictures.

**Example:** ● I was in Tokyo yesterday—I'm sorry, I mean Los Angeles—I went to Disneyland. There were no Japanese tourists because the camera shop ran out of film.

**Greeks**—see Gays

## B. PERSONALIZING IT: THE "HALF AND HALF" PREMISE

This premise could be called the "salad bar" of racial humor. With it, you can mix and match ethnic stereotypes for a big-laugh combination.

- Examples:** ● I'm half Polish and half Irish. I want to drink but I can't get the cap off the bottle.
- I'm half Swedish and half Japanese. I want to have a sex change and then take pictures of it.
  - I'm half Vietnamese and half Chinese. Every time I eat a Great Dane, an hour later I'm hungry again.

## C. PERSONALIZING IT: SELF-TRASHING

The humor in this lesson can be considered objectionable. Learn to deflect these objections by directing the humor at yourself. You'll make everyone feel comfortable—not prejudiced.

- Formulas:** ● I feel like the only \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_.
- I have to get back to your house before you do and \_\_\_\_\_.

**Examples:**

Black	Jewish
I feel like the only <u>choc-</u> <u>olate chip</u> in the <u>cookie</u> .	● I have to get back to ● your house before you do ● and <u>measure</u> your suits.

## LESSON IV: BASIC REGIONAL REFERENCES

Overemphasizing where you've come from, or where you've been, points out just how "observational" a funnyman or woman you really are.

**Example:** ● I live in Montana because I failed the test to get into Wyoming.

Other regions you should know include:

**New York**—You get beaten up every day.  
**Los Angeles**—Everyone says “dude,” drinks white wine.  
**The South**—Beverly Hillbillies, the word “y’all.”  
**The Midwest**—Farms, state fairs, corn dogs.

**LESSON V: PROPS**

Nothing perks up an act like props; for example, a simple pair of sunglasses can give you the power of a Stevie Wonder impression. So make sure props are a part of your act. Versatility counts, as in the following example:

- Prop example:** • Wig  
**Uses:** • Top of the head—Mr. T  
 • Over the chest—A hairy guy  
 • Under one arm—Madonna  
 • On top of the other arm—A mole

Four jokes, one wig. That’s the power of props.

**LESSON VI: IMPRESSIONS AND OTHER STAGE BUSINESS**

Why do plain old jokes when you can do a *real* crowd pleaser and stand out from the pack?

**A. IMPRESSIONS**

One method for impressions is to put your characters in a funny situation:

**Example:** • “What if Jack Nicholson, Jim from *Taxi*, Clint Eastwood, and William Shatner went on a camping trip together? I’m not sure, but I think it would sound something like this . . .”

Whoever you do, make sure to milk your impression for all it’s worth:

**Example:** • “Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. That was Jimmy Cagney.”

**B. OTHER CROWD PLEASERS**

Rap	Juggling
Ventriloquism	Magic
Song parodies	Hypnosis
Acrobatic tricks	Tell the audience they were the best crowd all week.
Dancing	

**LESSON VII: HECKLERS**

As a hack, you’ll often encounter guys who think they can do just as well. Even if they can, you’ll get the upper hand with a few snappy comebacks:

**A. THE STATUS INSULT**

- Examples:** • “Hey, look, pal, I don’t come down to McDonald’s and knock your burgers off the grill.”  
 • “What’s your name?” [Then follow up by repeating the question, while pretending to use sign language, as if the heckler were deaf.]

**B. STRONGER STUFF**

- Examples:** • “Hey, look, pal, I don’t come down to where you work and knock the dicks out of your mouth.”  
 • “Hey, look, if I wanted to listen to an asshole, I’d fart.”

**LESSON VIII: OBSERVATIONAL HUMOR**

The comic who can notice the “little things” is a comic

who’s destined for a big payoff. Observational humor teaches us that no crumb is too small for kneading into the bread of comedy:

- Examples:** • On shampoo bottles they say lather, rinse, repeat. But they don’t say when to stop.  
 • Why do they call it toothpaste? You don’t glue anything to your teeth with it.

**Other areas of concentration:** Rest rooms, toilet paper, cereal boxes, the inconsistencies of *Gilligan’s Island*.

**LESSON IX: SEGUES**

In the previous lessons, you learned one killer joke and routine after another. In this lesson, we cover what to say *between* jokes—the segues.

**A. THE DISCLAIMER**

Present yourself as someone who knows human nature:

- Examples:** • I couldn’t make this stuff up—it’s too real.  
 • The truth is funnier than anything I could make up.

**B. “IT’S MY JOB”**

Or present yourself as a man with a special creative pipeline:

- Examples:** • Folks, it’s my job to think this stuff up.  
 • Folks, that’s all I do all day is think about this weird shit.

**C. SHORT AND STRANGE**

It doesn’t take much to show that you’re both unusual *and* in control:

- Examples:** • Pretty frightening. • Kinda scary. • Not something you want to see every day.

**LESSON X: A GOOD CLOSER**

A good closer is not just a necessity—it’s a source of pride to the hack comic. A crowd pleaser (see Lesson VI B) is always a good choice. But for a change of pace, consider the sentimental closer. With the addition of a few realistic details, such as place names, the following example will get the crowd on your side:

*“You know, folks, my dad’s not feeling well. Don’t worry—he’s not in the hospital or anything, he’s just feeling a little down about life. You get to a certain age, I guess, and you look around and ask: What was it all for? The money, the house, the cars. What does it mean? And you know, when I came into the club tonight, I was feeling bad, thinking about my dad, I guess. But when I got up here onstage and saw your smiling faces, I think I discovered what it’s all about. It’s about laughter. It’s about making even just one person feel better about their life. And if you believe in the power of love and in the ability to send positive energy out into the universe, I’d like to ask you to send a little energy in my dad’s direction. A little bit goes a long way. Thank you. And good night.”*

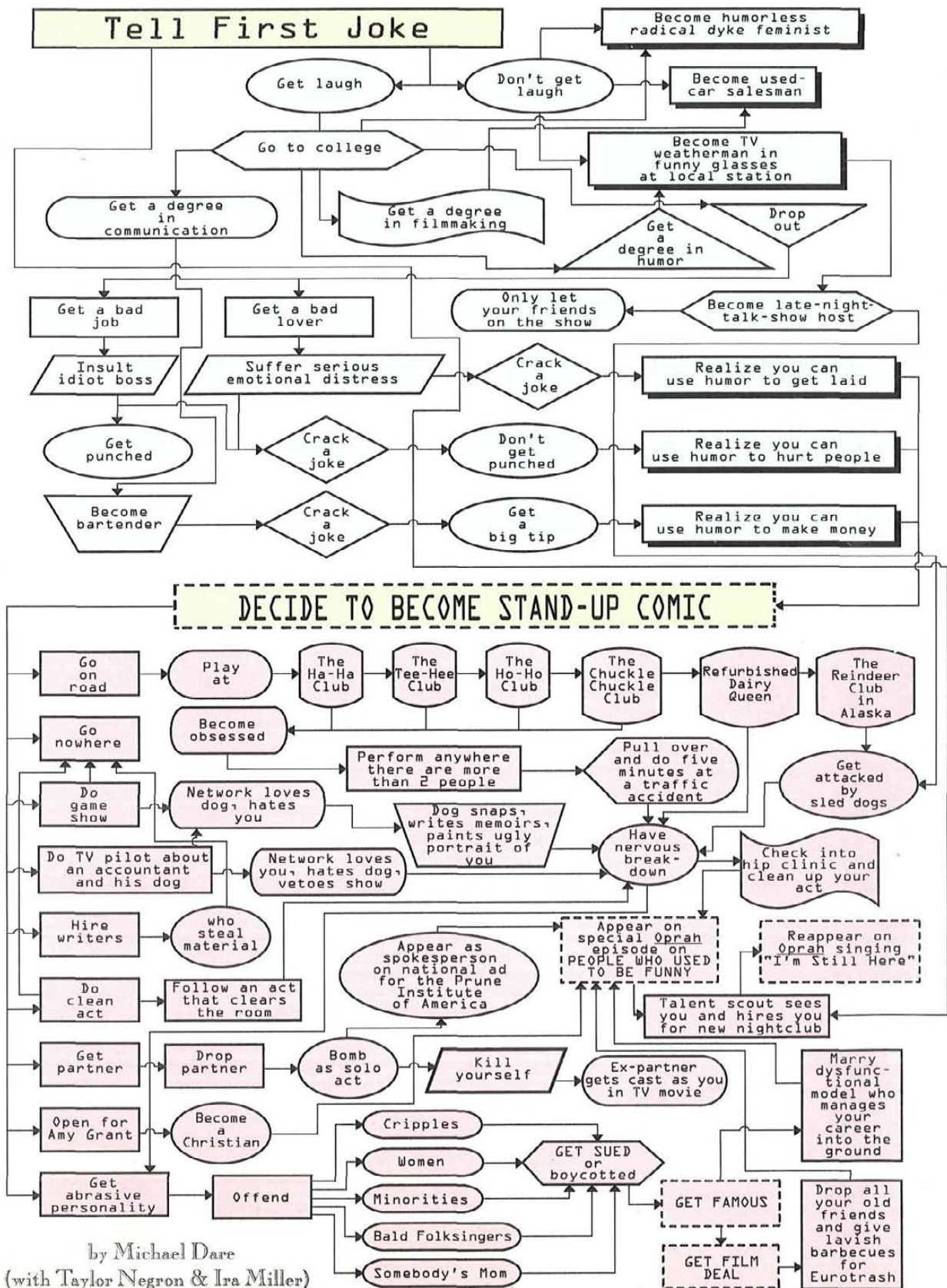
**CONCLUSION**

Being a hack comic isn’t necessarily easy. You’ll hear envious comics call you “hack,” and you’ll know they mean bad things by it. But the rewards of money, travel, and the opportunity to harangue people in a dark room night after night far outweigh the drawbacks.

Remember: It’s about laughter. It’s about making even just one person feel better about their life.

Thank you. And good night.

# The Comic's Career Track

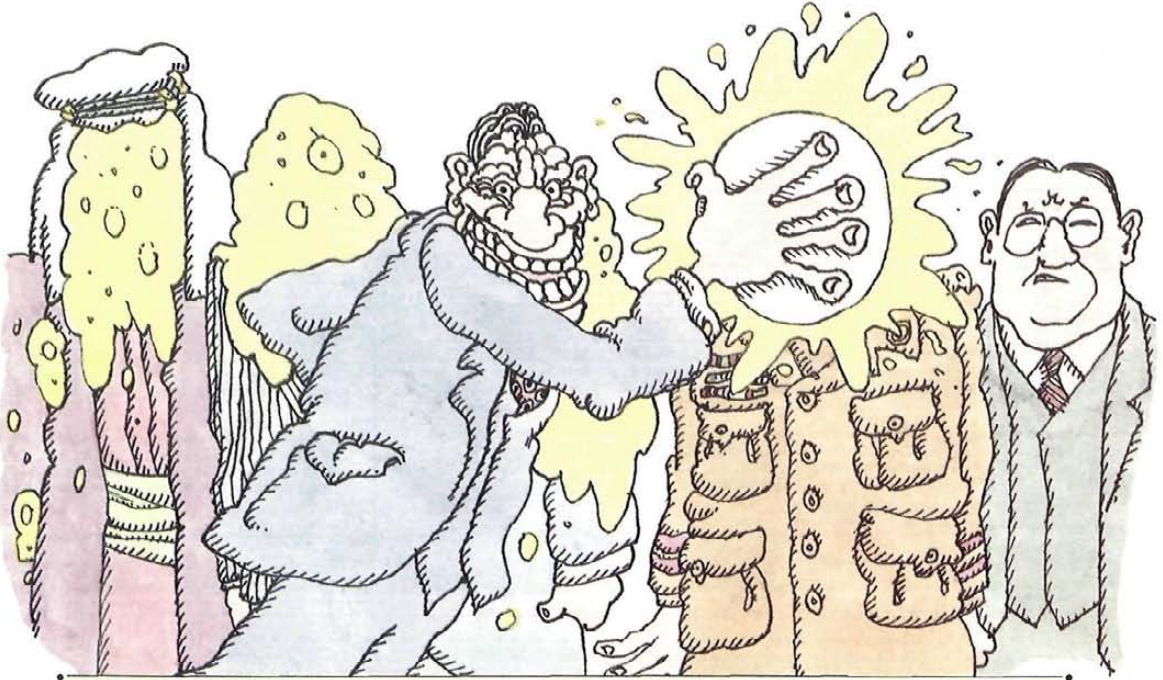


by Michael Dare  
(with Taylor Negron & Ira Miller)

# Strung Out on Comedy

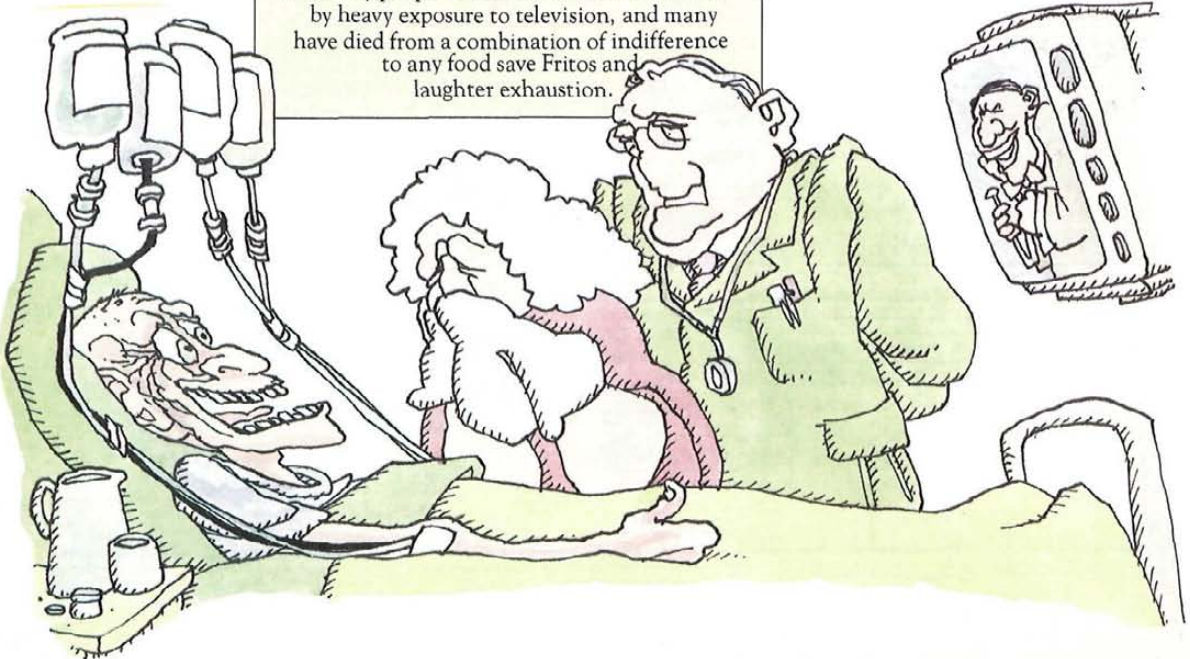
by Gahan Wilson

Potentially more deadly than the previous plagues of crack and heroin, the curse of addictive humor has been devastating the United States.



It started in high places when the president, triumphant after winning the election by means of the famous "Cream Pie Debate" on national television, became hopelessly addicted to the practice of slamming pies violently into the face of anyone who came within range, including members of his Cabinet and distinguished foreign visitors.

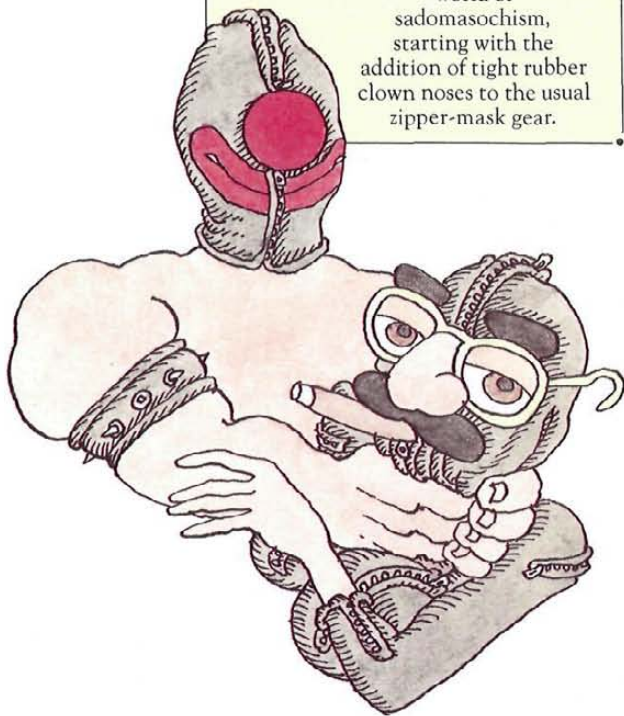
Ordinary people found themselves "turned on" by heavy exposure to television, and many have died from a combination of indifference to any food save Fritos and laughter exhaustion.



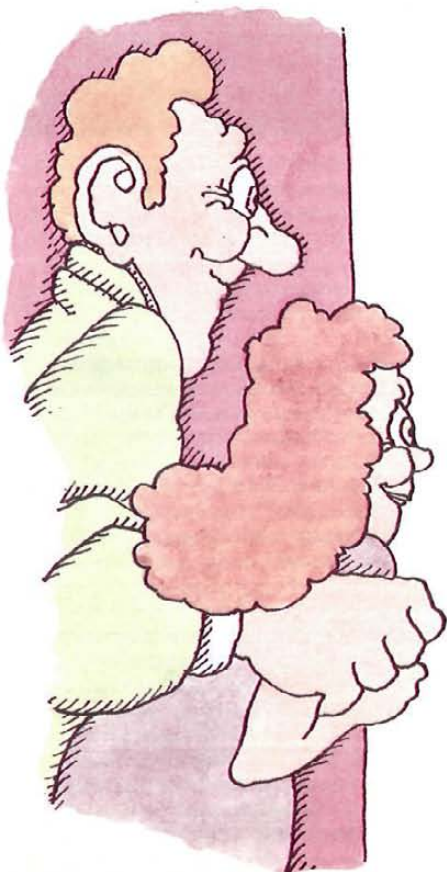
Comedians themselves were among the most pathetic victims. Many compulsive stand-ups have had brick walls surgically implanted on their backs so that they could live constantly in a comedy-club atmosphere. Some even sacrificed parts of their bodies to make room for a microphone implant.



The expression "sick humor" took on an even more sinister meaning when it entered the dark world of sadomasochism, starting with the addition of tight rubber clown noses to the usual zipper-mask gear.



But without doubt the most heartbreaking turn this hideous addiction has taken is the compulsion on the part of young parents to thoughtlessly involve their own tiny, helpless children in impromptu routines with total strangers, and even to laugh hilariously at the most ghastly outcomes of their tragic improvisations.





# Catskill Fantasy

by  
David  
Feuer

**The hills are alive  
with laughter at  
Morty Gunty's  
Comedy Dream Camp.**

*"... But the first step is a doozie!" Immersion in the hearty world of Comedy Dream Camp begins upon arrival with a generous three-tummler salute.*

As the verdant mountains of New York State's majestic "borscht belt region" roll by, Bill (not his real name), a successful Baltimore haberdasher, is sadly recalling that the last laugh he can remember getting was in junior high school when he was called to the blackboard while in a state of adolescent tumescence. "And even that was more like a nervous giggle than a laugh," he adds ruefully. Tom, a fiftyish high school biology teacher from Pocatello, Idaho, painfully recounts a lifetime's worth of groans and "Is that supposed to be funny?"s every time he's tried to tell a joke. He theorizes that it's a genetic problem: "No one in my family has a sense of humor."

Meanwhile Bob, a portly south Florida refrigeration-equipment distributor, is growing dewy-eyed as he describes his luckless search for love as a humorless single in a time when "chicks want guys who can make them laugh." And Alex, a twice-divorced New York cardiologist, tells, with obvious shame, of a recent desperate trip to a seedy Times Square novelty store where he purchased "one of those stupid little laugh machines. It broke ten minutes after

Photos by Dennis Kitchen





I got it home." By the time our bus turns north at Kerhonkson, New York, I have heard at least a dozen such stories, all from average Americans who have agreed to spend \$10,000 for a one-week stay at Morty Guntz's Comedy Dream Camp.

As we step off the bus, there is a palpable excitement, which intensifies as we are greeted by the camp's staff. My co-campers seem like a bunch of Little Leaguers who have come face-to-face with the '63 New York Yankees. From my recent comedy research, I recognize many of the tanned, surgically tightened faces that protrude from the checked sports jackets: Shecky Greene, London Lee, Corbett Monica, Jack Carter, Jan Murray, Sandy Baron, Morey Amsterdam, Pat Cooper, Jackie Gayle—a virtual pantheon of immortal gagmeisters whose combined one-liners, if delivered end to end, would fill a stand-up routine nearly *thirty years long!* These living legends have aged, but their rheumy eyes still exude the timeless twinkle of nearly a half-century's worth of rim shots.

After an autograph session, we are officially greeted by the camp's owner and founder, Mr. Morty Guntz, the Prince of "Shpritz." Mr. Guntz gives us a brief history of his unique camp, which he founded in 1970 after a precipitous decline in his career allowed him to experience firsthand what life was like without getting the big laughs. "It was worse than stomach cancer," he tells the campers in a booming voice. "But at least I had known the feeling once of being a hysterically funny guy. It made me think about the millions of unfortunates who *never* have this experience. I decided then and there to create a very special environment where the average person can feel hysterical . . . and ba-boom . . . Morty Guntz's Comedy Dream Camp was born."

Later, over a plate of stuffed derma, I introduce myself to Morty and explain that I am a journalist rather than a participant, and intend to spend the week observing and taking notes. Morty chuckles, "Journalist. Hey, that's not bad for an amateur." His attempt to make me feel funny is a little insulting. When I wonder aloud whether, at \$10,000 a week, his motivation for founding Comedy Dream Camp is entirely humanitarian, Morty becomes quite serious. He assures me that a solid week of getting big yuks is "a bargain at twice the price. You'll see what I mean."

The operative phrase at Comedy Dream Camp is "individual attention." Each camper is assigned his own "tumbler" (or wisecracking comic) who will serve as both straight man and appreciative audience. In order to maintain the camp's special environment, the brochure advises us to avoid contact with the "outside world." This includes making phone calls to family and friends (to brag about how funny we've become) and fraternizing with the locals and hired help, who, we are warned, will not appreciate our brand of humor.

Many of the camp's activities center around meals, and dinner that first night finds the "dream-week experience" already in full gear. The camp's mess hall is set up to resemble an ultra-chic restaurant, complete with "beautiful people." As I spoon away at a plate of borscht, I watch Bob, the luckless-in-love refrigeration distributor, as he stuffs two straws up his nose for the benefit of a comely, intelligent-looking young woman seated at a nearby table.



*Miniature golf, maximum laughs: Comedy Dream Campers quickly get the hang of mixing (funny) business and pleasure.*



*" . . . And this pool stays empty for those of our guests who don't want to swim at all!" A cool afternoon dip refreshes even the tiredest jokes—and campers.*



Jokes at sunset  
provide a restful  
counterpoint as  
campers hone  
their delivery  
skills before a  
group of  
sage stand-up  
veterans.



Over her handsome boyfriend's shoulder, the woman is biting down on her lower lip, trying to stifle laughter. When Bob starts making like a walrus, she is out of her chair and pressing up against him, purring on about how she's "always been a sucker for a guy with a great sense of humor" and slipping her room key under his entrée. I find myself wondering how a fifty-year-old man of average intelligence can get himself to believe this!

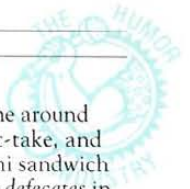
The camp has all the usual resort facilities, and the first full day finds our group engaged in a range of activities from tennis to canoeing. At the shuffleboard court, Bill, the Baltimore haberdasher, is tentatively trying out an anecdote on Shecky Greene about the time he received a dozen bolts of wide-wale corduroy instead of the gabardine he ordered. Shecky goes into an instant laugh conniption and insists that Bill repeat his "dynamite story" to London Lee, Corbett Monica, and Sandy Baron, who are playing volleyball nearby. London does a seltzer spit-take clear across the court. A stream of seltzer flies out of Corbett's nose, and Sandy announces that he's peed in his pants.

Later, at the tennis court, Tom, the high school biology teacher, is trying out a joke on Morey Amsterdam. "What do you do with a dog with no legs? . . . Take it for a drag." Morey sinks to his knees in paroxysms of violent laughter, barely able to breathe, his face the color of last night's borscht. Meanwhile, out on the links, Bob puts two golf balls in his cheeks and makes like a groundhog, which causes Jan Murray and Pat Cooper to both miss their putts.

All over camp, the sound of hysterical laughter and exclamations of "brilliant," "dynamite gag," and "great stuff" fill the humid Catskill air. At poolside Alex, the cardiologist, is as excited as a ten-year-old on Christmas Eve as he tells me that Jackie Gayle wants to use his "How can you tell the head nurse? . . . By the dirt on her knees" gag in his upcoming Labor Day gig at Wolman's Bungalow Colony. By evening the atmosphere, which initially had been tense and tentative (these campers would have sooner gone one-on-one with Michael Jordan than try to be funny around this bunch of funnymen!), is relaxed and raucous. This group of happy campers seems intent on getting its money's worth. I'm probably the only one who hasn't gotten a sidesplitting laugh all day.

That evening at dinner, when an attractive waitress asks for my order, I tell her I'll try the pot roast . . . and that I'd like it *lean*. "Lean," she repeats, with a soft, seductive giggle. Taking my hand, she looks deep into my eyes and says, "You are a very funny man." But "lean" — what is funny about "lean"? Surely her reaction is rehearsed. And yet . . . I distinctly remember the brochure saying that the hired help would "not appreciate our brand of humor." I'm a bit confused.

Later that night, in the camp's health spa, I corner Morty and recount this incident. What was so funny about "lean"? Morty explains that it's not so much the word "lean," but the delivery. "You're a *naturally* funny guy, you know, like Chaplin." He advises me that with some decent material,



I could be hysterically funny.

The following morning, I elect to go horseback riding with Morey Amsterdam, Jackie Gayle, and Sandy Baron. I don't feel totally comfortable astride my mount and it shows. When Morey quips, "I thought you said you were born in the saddle," I automatically come back with "No. I said *Seattle*." Morey is literally sobbing and clutching at his chest. "Stop already," he pleads, "I've got a pacemaker." In between waves of hysterical laughter, Jackie is begging, "Please, no more. I just had a hernia operation." I have to admit, the "Seattle" gag is kind of cute, but I suspect that their reaction is exaggerated – that is, until I see a wet spot forming on the front of Sandy's trousers. I doubt whether anyone is going to intentionally pee in a pair of *woolen* slacks!

The real turning point for me comes during lunch that day. At lunchtime, this time the mess hall is set up to look exactly like New York's famous Carnegie Deli – hanging salamis, overweight waiters, and so forth. I find myself sitting round-table with Shecky, Morey, and London. Shecky launches into a rather long-winded Helen Keller joke with a weak payoff. You can hear a pin drop. London follows with a gag about two retired Jewish businessmen in Wyoming. Nothing. Morey tries with a quick "What do you say to a one-legged hitchhiker? . . . Hop in." It's death row. All eyes turn to me. On instinct, I decide to go with a basic fart

noise, and suddenly it's Heimlich maneuver time around the table. London lets loose with a monster spit-take, and he's not even drinking anything! Half a pastrami sandwich comes out of Shecky's nose, and Morey actually *defecates* in his pants! Intoxicated by my own wit, I deliver my *coup de grâce*. "What does an elephant use for a vibrator? . . ."

Before I can deliver the punch line, Morey is already laughing. The *concept* is killing him! And despite handicapping myself by delivering the punch line in Yiddish, the Chinese busboy still loses a whole tray of dishes. Heck, maybe I am funny!

Later, Morty admonishes me for that morning's horseback-riding incident. "You don't let loose with a killer gag like 'Seattle' without checking into people's medical conditions," he warns. "You could have killed those guys." It is a sobering thought, and I start to realize that with great wit comes tremendous responsibility. But there is something else on my mind – the question of why no one has ever laughed at my jokes before this week. Morty explains that it "takes comic genius to appreciate comic genius." His words somehow ring true. I decide that for the next few days I am going to flex my funny muscle. The results turn out to be beyond my wildest dreams. By my own count, I reel off well over *two thousand* gags – all of which are greeted with gut-wrenching laughter. I can best describe myself as a cross between Oscar Wilde and Uncle Miltie.

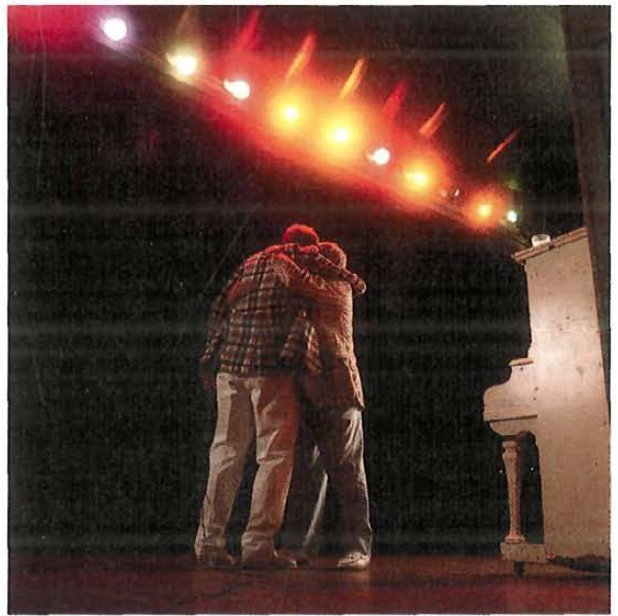


On Saturday afternoon Bob works dirty and scores with a rare spit-take trifecta, showing why most meals must be taken outdoors.



A few exchanges stand out in my memory. On a hike up Slide Mountain, my "I took the bus all the way from New York City and, boy, are my arms tired" sends Jack Carter right off the summit. All the while he's screaming, "Great twist. Great twist." During a canoe trip on Peekamoose Lake, I tip the canoe and Shecky too with a dead-on impersonation of my recently deceased aunt Gladys. That same day, I convulse the players of a badminton game with a personal anecdote about the time I accidentally went to work without underwear. The jokes go on and on.

The ultimate moment of our dream week comes on the final night, Cabaret Night, when we all share the camp's nightclub stage with a surprise "mystery" comic. It turns out to be the one and only Mr. Buddy Hackett—the Babe Ruth of stand-up. I am awed and excited, but when I learn that the staff has chosen me to follow Buddy, my legs turn to jelly. In the dressing room, Morty rubs my shoulders and takes me through my paces. He gives me a final piece of advice: "Just stay within yourself and you'll do okay." Morty's words prove prophetic. Buddy comes on and gives it his best shot, pulling out all his classic bits. The polite titters segue to rude heckling and then to deadly silence. By "Good night and God bless" time, half the packed house has retreated to the rest rooms. I'm up next. When I open with a quick "Where do WASPs eat? . . . In restaurants," the place goes wild! After the show, Buddy finds me in the dressing room. A sweaty arm around my shoulder, the vanquished Great One utters the words that will stay with me forever. "You're funny, kid. Very funny." ■



*"You're not just a refrigerator distributor, you're also a beautiful human being as well." The week comes to a close on Cabaret Night, an evening of hot stage lights—and even warmer embraces.*

### If You Go to Morty Guntz's Comedy Dream Camp...

#### HOW TO GET THERE

▲ *By car:* To Exit 16 on the New York State Thruway. Then just follow the billboards. *By bus:* Take the Short Line to Kerhonkson, New York, where you'll be picked up by one of the camp's tumblers and driven the remaining distance in a late-model Pontiac.

#### WHAT TO TAKE

▲ *Plaid sports jacket and gold jewelry are provided, but the selection is limited, so it's best to bring your own.*

▲ *Personal props such as whoopee cushions and funny glasses are allowed, but are generally frowned upon. If you must, you can bring them along, but keep them in your suitcase until you absolutely need them.*

#### HELPFUL SUGGESTIONS

*A little knowledge of Yiddish is helpful, but definitely not essential. If you have time, pick up a copy of Fifty Phrases to Plotz From before you go.*

### Other Dream Camp Experiences to Consider:

#### MORTIMER ADLER'S FANTASY THINK TANK

*Tackle thorny theological issues and age-old philosophical questions with many of today's best minds as you come up with all the answers and leave your brainy "colleagues" scratching their eggheads in wonder.*

#### SUSAN FORD'S REHAB FANTASY

*Does daughter know best? This camp offers the intense self-confrontation of the rehab experience for people who have never taken drugs. Already some are calling it "better than Betty."*

#### GEORGE JONES'S COUNTRY MUSIC PERSONAL TRAGEDY CAMP

*It's a hard left at Heartbreak and straight on to Misery at George Jones's Country Music Personal Tragedy Camp. Choose from a variety of tragic, faith-strengthening setbacks as you follow the path to country stardom, climaxing in the discovery of your drunk child dead at the bottom of the camp pool.*



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FUNNY... GASP!...  
EARTH IN DANGER!  
... MUST WARN  
OTHERS!

"TOO MUCH  
FUNNY!"

RIP TAYLOR  
YAKOV  
SMIRNOFF  
PUPPY

PAUL  
RODRIGUEZ  
HOWIE  
MANDEL  
JOE  
PIEPOPO

GALLAGHER

THIRD ANNUAL CAC COLA  
JOKE WAR

LAUGH  
'N  
PUKE  
OFF!

RANBACCIO'S  
RIM SHOT

GIGGLES  
WEST

HARDY HAR  
HAR'S III

STUCKEY'S  
LAFF STOP

STEAK AND  
FARCE

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OOH,  
FRENCHY-SAN,  
YOU SO  
TIGHT!

HEY, SUZIE  
WONG, EASY  
ON THE  
CUTICLES....

# EVIL CLOWN COMICS

## "TOO MUCH FUNNY!"

PAUL  
MAZURSKY  
ON LINE  
THREE, SIR!

HOLLYWOOD

WRITTEN BY  
NICK BAKAY  
ILLUSTRATED BY  
ALAN  
KUPPERBERG

TELL THAT PUD I'M NOT HOME...AND  
GET THIS CLUSTER OF PARASITES OUT  
OF HERE. I NEED SOME PRIVATE TIME.

VERY  
GOOD,  
SIR!

BUT IT WASN'T ALWAYS LIKE THIS, WAS IT? WHY, ONE COMEDY  
BOOM ABO THIS SCARAMOUCHE CALLED OBSCURITY HIS MIDWAY.  
I REMEMBER IT LIKE YESTERDAY....

WHAT'S WITH  
THE CLOWN?

HEY, FRENCHY MAN!  
BE COOL....

SUCCESS HAS REALLY  
CHANGED THAT GUY....

YESTERDAY...YESTERDAY  
...YES...

IF I DON'T  
STOP THIS SPINNING  
I'M GONNA BLOW  
CHUNKS.

...BEFORE LADY LUCK LIFTED HER SKIRT TO ME FOR AN ALL-YOU-CAN-EAT SPECIAL. THE SALAD DAYS, AND BABY MINE DIDN'T HAVE ANY ENDIVE,  
ARUGULA, RADICCHIO, OR HEARTS OF PALM. JUST A LITTLE ICEBERG WITH A SQUIRT OF WHO-GIVES-A-DAMN....

LEXIN  
LOCA

SPARE A  
MUNICIPAL BOND FOR A FELLOW  
AMERICAN DOWN ON HIS LUCK?

ROUGH TIMES CALL FOR ROUGH CLOWNING. BUT FUNNY BREAKS COME IN FUNNY WAYS.

FRENCHY, IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, THERE'S A COMEDY BOOM GOING ON OUT THERE! CLEAN YOURSELF UP, YOU GOT AN AUDITION IN AN HOUR, AND LET'S GET A TASTE!

TRANSIENTS WELCOME HOTEL

IF I HAD KNOWN THE AUDITION WAS FOR "STAR SEARCH" I WOULD HAVE BLOWN IT OFF. WHO KNEW THEY'D DIG MY SHIT? THEIR FIRST MISTAKE WAS PUTTING ME IN THE SAME DRESSING ROOM AS MY COMPETITION....

YOU GET ONE SOLID LAUGH OUT THERE AND I'LL CUT YOUR TONGUE OUT AND FUCK THE STUMP - CAPEESH, FUNNYMAN?

IT'S CRAZY, BUT AMERICA FELL IN LOVE WITH THE DL' FRENCHSTER....

OUR GRAND CHAMPION ... FRENCHY T. CLOWN!

SORRY ABOUT THE YEAST INFECTION STUFF, EP, BUT LISTEN, I GOT A SOLID, FAMILY TEN MINUTES ON COLONOSCOPY ....

FRENCHY HACK  
★★★★ 0.00

ONE TV SHOT AND THIS CLOWN WAS IN THE FUNHOUSE WITHOUT ANY UNDERPANTS! EVERY CITY HAD A COMEDY CLUB WITH SOME LAME NAME, AND YOU COULD COUNT ON TWO THINGS: EAST LAUGHS AND EASY WAITRESSES....

SO DID YOU TWO FUCK BEFORE THE SHOW, OR ARE YOU WAITING FOR LATER SO YOU CAN BOTH THINK ABOUT ME WHEN YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES?!

HA-HA-HA!  
HA-HA-HA!  
COUGH COUGH....

712 Buffalo: The Funland Inn  
713 Rosemead: The Comedy Club  
714 Orange: The Only 'n' Clownie  
715 Hollywood: The Topper  
716 Tori: Day's Laugh Pit

I EVEN YANKED SOME MAJOR DINERO PENNING COMPLEX, SATIRICAL MATERIAL FOR A MAN I'M PROUD TO CALL A GENIUS....

"SO I'M ROTO-ROOTING THIS BROAD'S SHIT CANAL..."

NO, NO. LISTEN TO ME, DICEMAN... IT'S FUNNIER IF YOU HIT "SHIT" HARDER. THIS IS A VERY DELICATE OPENER, YOU DON'T WANT TO TIP THE JOKE TOO SOON.

SUCCESS KEPT SPREADING HER LEGS WIDER....

UM-HMMM, YES, YES. NOW, WHAT'S THIS I HEAR ABOUT YOU GITTIN' YOUR OWN SHOW?

BEFORE I SPILL THE CONCEPT, DO YOU PROMISE TO BE A GUEST?

ARSENIC LAL

YES, MY BROTHER! WOOF! WOOF! WOOF!

I JOTTED THE IDEA FOR A DREAM PROJECT DOWN ON A COCKTAIL NAPKIN, TOOK IT TO MERV GRIFFIN, AND BEFORE YOU KNOW IT ...

SPANKTASTIC! THOSE RAISED BUM-WELTS PUT ORVILLE REDENBACHER IN THE LEAD! HE'S GOING TO BE HARD FOR CHARLTON HESTON TO CATCH IN THE FLAIL-OFF!

OH... MY... GOD!

OKAY, IT'S TIME FOR THE LIGHTNING ROUND! AND REMEMBER, THE WINNER EARNS THE RIGHT TO PLUG HIS NEW PROJECT ON THE AIR!

Frenchy's CELEBRITY SPANK-OFF

CHARLTON HESTON 37776

ORVILLE REDENBACHER 5899

IF YOU WANT STARS, YOU HAVE TO LET THEM PLUG THEIR NEW WORK....

WHAT A COMEBACK! LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE DONE THIS BEFORE. NOW, CHUCK, YOU HAVE A NEW MOVIE ABOUT A FAMOUS MAN COMING OUT?

WELL, WHEN YOU'VE PLAYED MOSES, BEN-HUR, MICHELANGELO, AND... AND... GASP....

CELBRITY SPANK-OFF

C'MON, YOU'RE A BIG FELLA... SPIT IT OUT!

I... I'M VERY EXCITED ABOUT THE PROJECT!!! NNNRRGGHH! SWEET JESUS!

Variety

BOFFO PADDLE RATINGS CUT CBS' COMPETITION TO RIBBONS!

FRENCHY'S CELEBRITY SPANK-OFF

SUITS! WHY IS IT EVERY ASSHOLE IN A HUGO BOSS HERNIA TRUSS WANTS TO MEDDLE IN THE VINEYARD OF THE PADDLE? ALL OF A SUDDEN EVERYBODY WAS A FUCKING EXPERT!



WE WANT TO SEE MORE CHILDREN ON THE SHOW. FOCUS GROUPS WANT THE 18-21 DEMOGRAPHIC.

OH, YOU GOT SOME FUNNY FOR ME, PAL?

CALM DOWN, FRENCHY. LARRY'S THE MAN BEHIND "FACTS OF LIFE."

OKAY, FUNNYMAN, THREE INDIANS WALK INTO A TAPAS BAR. THEY SEE A MONKEY DRINKING A BEER. KNOW WHAT THE CHIEF SAYS?



N-NO... (GULP)

AH HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA-HA!



>WHISPER <  
>WHISPER <

GYNAYHH!



FOR THE LOVE OF GOD, YOUR PUNCH LINE SENT THE GINGER ALE RIGHT UP HIS NOSE... TO HIS BRAIN!

HE'S DEAD.



NOW, THAT'S THE KIND OF LAUGHTER THEY DON'T TEACH AT WHARTON, BOYS. YOU WANT MORE SHOWS, IT'LL COST YOU ANOTHER \$120,000 AN EPISODE. END OF MEETING, HAVE YOUR GIRL GO DOWN ON MY GIRL....

ALL THIS SUCCESS WAS MAKING ME CRANKY. THANK GOD I STILL HAD A GIFT FOR RELAXATION... THE BUBBLES TICKLE...



IT'S BEEN A GOOD DAY FOR SPARKLING BEVERAGES, MY PET.

SO... UHH!... UHH! SO TWO PENGUINS WALK INTO A SINGLES BAR. THERE'S A MONKEY AT THE BAR...

SWEET JESUS, SHE'S IN THE COMEDY GAME TOO!



EVERYONE'S A PRO!!!  
WHAT'S THE MATTER, LOVER?

YOU TOOK THE STING OUT OF MY PADDLE.

ALL OF A SUDDEN THE SWEET SMELL OF SUCCESS TURNED LIKE CHEESE ON A SIDEWALK, AND THE STINK HAD THE NEWS HOUNDS Slobbering....



HEY, CLARK KENT, WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU DOING?

EARNING A RAISE, FROM THE LOOKS OF THIS GARBAGE.

BUT THE WORST FUCKING THING ABOUT SUCCESS IS YOU GET AWAY WITH EVERYTHING....

GOLF AND WAR! THAT'S ALL YOU EVER TALK ABOUT! WHAT KINDA SIMPELMINDED FLUCK ARE YOU?



I MEAN, WHERE'S THE THRILL WHEN YOU CAN'T GET UNDER ANYONE'S SKIN?

THAT'S WILD, FRENCHY. SPEAKING OF WILD, I'D LIKE TO DO THE WILD THING WITH THAT LONI ANDERSON! I'D LIKE TO DRIVE HER AT PEBBLE BEACH, GRRRRR! BUT I WANT TO TELL YOU...



SO NOW WE'RE ALL CAUGHT UP. MEMORY LANE IS CLOSED FOR REPAIRS, AND I'M LIVING IN A PRESENT TENSE WHERE I HAVE TO LEAVE MY OWN MANSION TO GET SOME THINKING DONE....



BUT WHAT WAS THAT OFF IN THE DISTANCE? A LONELY FIRE FROM A STERNO CAN, AND THE SHADY PROMISE OF MISSHAPEN SILHOUETTES. IT COULD ONLY MEAN ONE THING...



THERE'S A CARNY IN TOWN!

LIKE THE PRODIGAL SON, I'D FOUND MY WAY BACK TO THE OVERRIPE TEAT OF MY MOTHER, NOT TO MENTION MY FAVORITE SEXY SIAMESE SAMPLER. TALK ABOUT YOUR POO-POO PLATTERS!



LULUBELL! FROGGY! THE BASKIN TRIPLETS!

FRENCHY!!!

AND CALL IT CARNY JUSTICE, BUT WHEN THIS CLOWN GOT OUT OF LINE, THERE WERE NO SUITS THERE TO FIND ME A BIGGER TRAILER. IN HOLLYWOOD THEY GIVE YOU A PORSCHIE FOR BEING A DICK- IN THE CARNY THEY GIVE YOU INTERNAL BLEEDING. IT WAS GREAT TO BE HOME.



AND THOSE BASKIN TRIPLETS DEFINITELY HAD MY LOVEJONES UP TO WARP SPEED.



MY PLUM SAC GROWS RIPE! I FEAR THE FRUIT SHALL FALL!

BUT LIKE THE JOY OF RIPPING OFF A GOOD CABBAGE FART, RETRIBUTION COMES HARD ON ITS HEELS....



THEY LOOK SO SICK! RIBIT! WHAT'S WRONG WITH 'EM?

THEY SHARE ONE GALLBLADDER, AND IT'S TERRIBLY OVERWORKED.

ONLY SURGICAL SEPARATION WILL... SOB... WILL SAVE THEM... THAT PROCEDURE CAN ONLY BE PERFORMED BY A PROMINENT HOLLYWOOD PLASTIC SURGEON. HE DID THE LANDPERS SISTERS, BUT... BUT...

DON'T TELL ME, HE COSTS MORE THAN A STEAK DINNER IN OSAKA....

WHAT CHOICE DID I HAVE? IT WAS BACK TO THE JUNGLE. BUT LIFE'S FUNNY. SOME-TIMES THE CLOWN FEELS THE STING OF FATE'S PADDLE.



WHY AM I BACK? I GOT TIRED OF THE GOOD LIFE, SO I'LL DO YOU A FAVOR AND ONLY ASK FOR 200 GRAND A WEEK.

WHERE THE HELL HAVE YOU BEEN? THE RATINGS ARE BETTER THAN EVER....

LISTEN UP, YOU HAG-BEEN. CHIPPER'S THE NEW CLOWN IN TOWN. HE'S YOUNG, HE'S PUNCTUAL, AND HE'S CHEAP.

CHIPPER'S CELEBRITY WANK-OFF

PUNCTUAL 'E? THAT ISN'T CLOWNING, IT'S ARMAGEDDON! BUT WITH THE TRIPLETS SICK, IT WAS NO TIME TO SING THE BLUES.



WHEN YOU'RE DONE, GO GET MY PORSCHIE...HEY, YOU MISSED A SPOT, BUTHOLE!

YES SIR, MR. CHIPPER.

SOMEDAY I'LL DRIVE THIS NOPHANDLE SO FAR UP YOUR ASS YOU'LL HAVE TO EAT TERMITES IF YOU WANT TO TAKE A SHIT....

THANK GOD FOR CABLE TV! THEY REALLY HAD SOME WEIRD CONCEPTS FOR CHANNELS, BUT WHEN I FINALLY LANDED A GIG ON "LAUGHTER IN THE RAIN," THE WORLD'S FIRST TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR COMEDY/WEATHER CHANNEL, I DROPPED MY MOP AND SHAGGED THAT PAYCHECK....



AS YOU CAN SEE, WE HAVE SOME LIGHT SQUALLS IN THE TRI-CITIES METROPLEX, AND FOLKS, IT LOOKS LIKE TUESDAY'S GOING TO BE WETTER THAN THE FLUFFER IN A SEKA MOVIE! BUT SERIOUSLY, DID YOU HEAR THE ONE ABOUT THE CUMULUS CLOUD AND THE RABBI!?

WHO KNEW WE'D TAPPED INTO SOMETHING AMERICA WANTED? SUCCESS WAS BACK LIKE A STRAY DOG AT A SLAUGHTERHOUSE! SURE, I MISSED THE SIMPLE LIFE, BUT LIKE I SAID, WHEN YOU'RE ON TOP THEY LET YOU GET AWAY WITH MURDER....



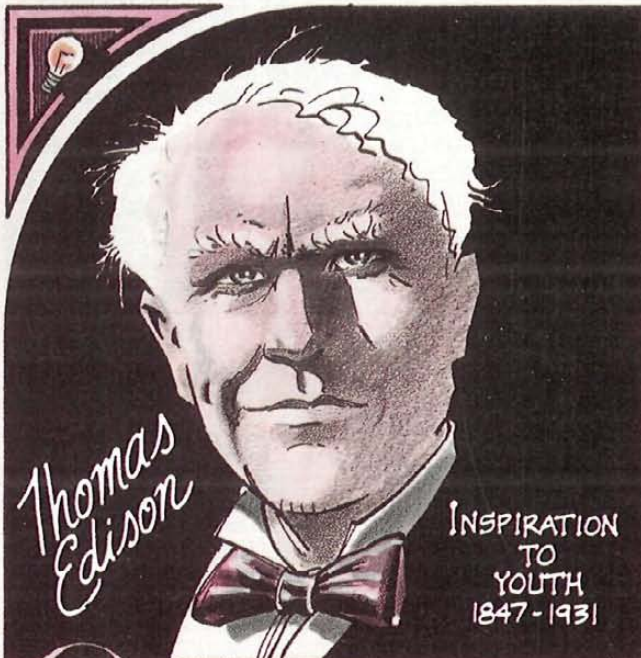
HEY, I GOT ONE! LOOK!

BRAVO, FRENCHY! BRAVO!

SPANKTASTIC!

HOLLYWOOD REPORTER: FRENCHY'S STORMFRONT IS #1 OVER 'COSBY', 'ROSEANNE', 'CHIEFS', ETC.

THE END



Thomas Edison

INSPIRATION TO YOUTH 1847-1931

# EDISON Myths DISPELLED

INVENTIONS FALSELY ATTRIBUTED TO THOMAS EDISON, WIZARD OF MENLO PARK.

## The STRATIFIED SHIRT FRONT

ONE OF THE MOST AMUSING OF EDISON MYTHS, IT WAS TO HAVE HAD A BOSOM COMPOSED OF 365 LAYERS OF A VERY THIN "SECRET" FABRIC. EACH MORNING A LAYER WOULD BE PEELED OFF, PRESENTING A SPOTLESS SHIRT FRONT.

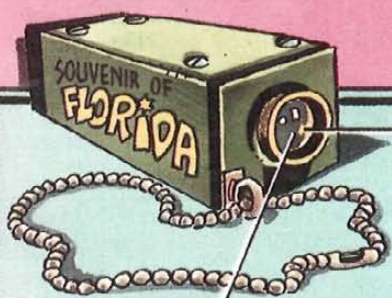


## EDISON DID NOT INVENT WAX PAPER!

IT WAS ACTUALLY THE BRAIN-CHILD OF ANOTHER ELECTRICAL GENIUS, C.P. STEINMETZ.



# RICH ON THE NATIONAL LAMPOON



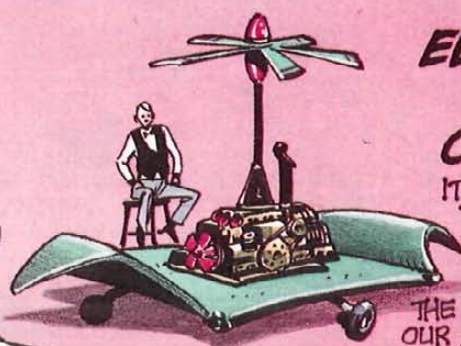
## THE EDISCOPE

THE VIEWER HOLDS THIS INGENUOUS DEVICE TOWARDS THE LIGHT AND LOOKS THROUGH THE HOLE TO VIEW A CUNNING LITTLE PICTURE. ALTHOUGH IT BEARS HIS NAME, EDISON DID NOT INVENT THE EDISCOPE,

**BUT HE DID INVENT THE BEADED CHAIN!**



ALTHOUGH HE WAS AN AVID COLLECTOR OF TIKI MUGS AND AN HONORARY PROFESSOR OF MIXOLOGY, EDISON DID NOT INVENT THE MAI TAI!



## EDISON'S HELICOPTER?

IT NEVER GOT OFF THE GROUND. IT WAS SIMPLY TOO HEAVY! HOWEVER, IT BECAME THE FORERUNNER OF OUR MODERN FAN!

## THE STAPLE

UNDAUNTED BY THE LACK OF FUNDS AND BY DECEITFUL EMPLOYEES, EDISON LABORED FOR 30 YEARS TO DEVELOP A STAPLE. ALTHOUGH HE FAILED, HE DID HAPPEN UPON A CRUDE PREDECESSOR OF THE

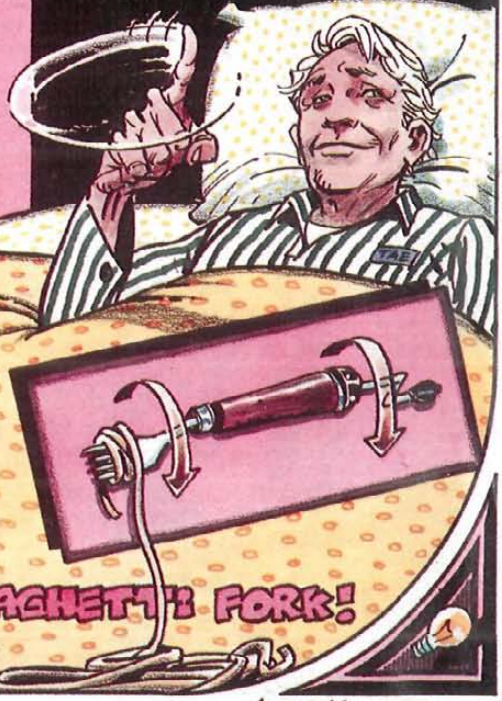
**PAPER CLIP!**

## ON HIS DEATHBED

EDISON FALSELY TOOK CREDIT FOR THE INVENTION OF THE

**ROTATING SPAGHETTI FORK!**

HE WAS DELIRIOUS.



ADAM KLUBERT

# SHITLOADS

by Chris Marcil

and Sam

Johnson

# OF FUN

**T**HE crumpled flier in my pocket says, "If there's a rock 'n' roll heaven, it looks like Shitloads of Fun, the world of kick-ass pleasure!" But heaven is the last place I am thinking of as I take in an amusement park that looks like a Disney dream gone wrong, where a long-haired teenage boy in a torn jean jacket celebrates my arrival by bouncing a cigarette butt off the windshield of my Honda Civic. Walking across the parking lot, I am assaulted by the crunch and grind of heavy-metal power chords spit out from dozens of concert-size speakers mounted on light poles. Ahead of me, the park sprawls like an animal hit on the highway, bloated and feculent—drab canvas tents, a few gunmetal machines jerking and wheezing like dilapidated construction cranes, cinder-block buildings strung together for convenience's sake, as at a shopping center. Nothing to relax the eye here, no fountains, no woods. They've been paved over. The area is flat and fenlike and hot;

the park's patrons, almost all teenage boys, swagger from attraction to attraction, their talk laced with obscenities.

This is Shitloads of Fun, the dream-child of a twenty-three-year-old former security guard whose fantasy of "doing fun shit that people will pay me for" has blossomed in an ever-growing mushroom cloud of success. Starting from the humblest of beginnings just five years ago, Shitloads of Fun is the new American rags-to-riches fairy tale, an empire—some would say a decadent one—paradoxically built on hard work, determination, and the forgotten adage "Know your customer." Perhaps brilliantly prescient, perhaps sadly predictable, Shitloads has taken the heavy-metal sensibility of a disenfranchised, alienated youth and turned it into this amusement park in the mill country of upstate New York. And although modest in size if not in scope, the park represents a bright spot on the dismal economic picture of this area. After three years of steady growth, Shitloads of Fun is earmarked for success.



I have come to meet the impresario behind it all, Gary Rickhauser, a thin, wiry young man with a wispy blond mustache, mirror sunglasses, and longish dishwater hair parted in the middle. He greets me in front of his shag-lined van—or, as Gary refers to it, his “pork wagon”—cheerily chewing gum, smoking a Kool, and grinning broadly. “Welcome, guy!” he shouts, thrusting into my hand a Budweiser wrapped in a foam “snuggie” on which is printed the ubiquitous Shitloads of Fun logo (designed by Gary himself), a flaming death’s-head smiling devilishly as a kind of stylized halberd splits its skull. Above this evil apparition is the park’s name, written in a gothic script and fashioned from riveted steel plates, suggesting (to me, anyway) hell, and not a place of fun at all. Shaking hands with Gary, I am struck by the comic incongruity of our meeting: this frankly cynical, even brutish young man, and me, a middle-aged critic. I ask him to tell me how it all began.



“Well, basically it’s a real Cinderella story, man. You know—total-low-life-scum beginning leading to vast piles of green. See, me and my buddy Brian used to take his van to real rich suburbs and have, you know, like a fair.” Gary stubs out his Kool and spins back and forth in the swiveling driver’s seat, laughing at the memory of good times. “For, like, a buck each, we’d let a bunch of kids in the back of the van and crank up the stereo to maximum amps. Then me and Brian’d get out on either side and rock it back and forth. Messed up the shocks bad, but these eleven- and twelve-year-olds were real into it. Like, they’d pretend they were a metal band rockin’ their way to a massive arena concert. It was real simple back then, and even though we’ve expanded a lot over the years, I always try to keep, like, that simple spirit.”

Watching as I drain my beer, Gary is quick to remove the empty can from its snuggie and replace it with a full one. “The secret of the thing,” he continues, “was to let the kids think that this was the kind of fun only money could buy. Which isn’t exactly a lie, ‘cause where else could kids get in a rocking van and pretend they were a coked-up metal group en route to the Meadowlands? Nowhere, man. We saw a need and we filled it.” He leans back, lights another cigarette, and fidgets restlessly with the lighter, a thick, metal thing with the Harley-Davidson wings in relief on the side. “‘Course, it wasn’t perfect. Like, we learned pretty fast that drawing fake tattoos with Magic Markers can cause skin infections, and that playing Knuckles [where pairs of children punch each other’s fists until one of them starts bleeding] is okay for the bigger kids, like thirteen-year-olds, but pretty harsh for the youngsters. But after a while, we got most a the kinks out. It’s a smooth operation now.”

Looking through the teardrop-shaped window in the side of the van, I am again struck by the low-slung, postmodern look of Shitloads of Fun. There are no fanciful castles or mock foreign villages, I notice. I ask if these are the cost-effective measures that make Shitloads one of the most popular case studies taught in business schools today.

Gary laughs and says, “Yeah, but that’s not why we don’t have no fake villages. I mean, no normal kid is gonna visit a fake village without thinkin’, ‘This is where parents take you for educational purposes, man. This sucks. Let’s trash it.’ No, we got no fake villages, or goofball dancers in straw hats and suspenders singing old-time songs with banjos, or puppet shows, or sea world, or a fruity little choo-choo or monorail. But what we do got . . . is what? Whatta we got?”

He looks at me expectantly, waiting for me to finish his sentence. I stammer something, but Gary finishes his sentence for me.

“We got a shitload a fun, right? Shitloads of Fun! Like the name, right? But check it out—what’s really missin’, man? Think about it. Look around. Whatta they got at every goddamn park that Shitloads ain’t got?”

I want to say, “Clean rest-room facilities,” but I have heard of Gary’s rough security policy (ticket-booth signs scream, “CHECK YOUR ATTITUDE AT THE GATE, DICK-HEAD”), and while I search for an answer, Gary says, “What we don’t got, man, is teenage idiots in cartoon-character costumes. What a waste, man. Every time I see Minnie Mouse, I wanna pull that big head off and see who’s inside.” As I drop my beer and the puddle stains the shag, I wonder, “And who is inside the head of Shitloads?” Perhaps the following “snapshots” may provide some clues.



Draining our refreshments, we leave the van and wander in. A blond-haired boy, growing his first mustache, recognizes Gary and gives him a high-five, shouting, “This is a total blast, man! You’re a genius!”

“Preciate it, man,” Gary replies curtly. The asphalt-paved midway is dotted with food stands—labeled “Fried ‘n’ Crunchy!”—souvenir shops, and monitors playing rock videos. We follow the crowd to one ride, where a well-built young man, shirtless and tattooed, attaches squirming canvas bags to hooks, attached in turn to cables that come together at the top of a tall steel pole. The effect, though less colorful, is not unlike that of a maypole.



An engine is engaged and the pole begins to spin, swinging the bags out over the heads of the cheering onlookers. As the acceleration builds, the bags blur into a circle, and what started as muffled yelps inside the bags turn to screams of terror. Adolescent voices rise in horrible unison: "Geettt meece outta heeere!" Then, disturbing silence, as the motor cuts off and the bags sway back, drag along the pavement, and finally come to rest where they started.

A centrifugal metaphor for an atomizing society? No—it's Kid-in-the-Sack, one of the most popular "rides" here, and one that started with the original version of Shitloads: "When me and Brian was doing our thing with the van, we used to give kids a quick nitrous hit from a can of whipped cream, then Brian would put 'em in a bag and swing 'em around. Here we can't use nitrous, but kids'll hold their breath before the bags start spinnin' real good. I never did it myself, but the trip is supposedly intense. A, the lack of oxygen is already givin' you a decent rush, and B, the bag is flyin' at about fifty or so. It's, like, a 99 percent puke rate, but that's the trip, man, tryin' not to puke. We try and change the bags every night or so."

Seeing an appalled look cross my face, Gary hastens to reassure me. "We're real careful about cables and weight distribution, 'cause you could probably take out about ten lives if one of the bags flew off. But, confidentially, in that case we'd blame the operator or the kid and put the ride out of commission for, like, a day or so—you know, like 'in memory of.' We're real sensitive about death and death emotions in general, 'cause kids eat that shit up and would probably come out in droves if we had a candle-light memorial."

Kid-in-the-Sack is just one of Shitloads' popular attractions that cater to a specialized thrill-seeking audience. Similar ones include Video Chicken, where two patrons face off using state-of-the-art simulation ("Not cheap, but decent," notes Gary); a dyed-black water slide called Hellpit, complete with jets of flame at the far end of the pool ("We also put salad oil in the water—for a real sick, oily feeling") and louder versions of the omnipresent heavy metal; and Survival Acre.



Survival Acre is perhaps the most haunting attraction at Shitloads. One passes through a gate into an enclosure of ankle-deep mud strewn with tin cans, paper, plastic cutlery, kitchen appliances, and sharp-edged pieces of steel and glass, all patrolled by packs of wild dogs. The object: to make your way to the other side armed with nothing but a long, sharpened stick. Musing aloud, I can't decide if Survival Acre represents a pre-Adamite industrial-age prophecy or merely another headbanger attraction.

Gary tries to clarify matters. "The name really speaks for itself. What we got here is an acre of real bad conditions. You know, mud and broken appliances plus these wild animals chasin' you. It's, like, man versus nature, which is always very popular with kids of all ages. How we do it is, we get these puppies from the pound and wrap their heads with piano wire to make 'em mean. Plus I pay these guys to go to people's houses and ask for their old appliances—we say it's for a handicapped home—then we throw it all in here and hose it down. I wouldn't walk in it, but people pay to do it, go and figure."

"It's very primal to me," I say. "Like going back in time to the Stone Age."

Gary's face brightens. "Hey, good idea, guy! We should, like, give people skins to wear through here—like a leather loincloth, or something."

Clearly, part of the popularity of Shitloads is rooted in its naked appeal to the dark side of its audience. But its detractors—organizations with names like the Concerned Parents League and Dads And Moms Miffed at InToxication (DAMMIT)—claim that in attracting customers with a taste for darkness, the park cannot avoid the evils that go along with it. Shitloads is attacked almost daily as a haven for teenage drinking and drug abuse. Even worse, they claim, local law enforcement is reluctant to move in on the park because of its "white knight" status in this depressed area. I ask Gary about these charges.

"Typical," he says. "I bet they never even been inside." Then he takes me to his "decent statement against drugs"—the Anti-Crack Tent. "I got a nonstop video that I made and starred in myself about this guy who does crack and goes nuts—trashing private property and stuff. I do some excellent Al Pacino-style drug-induced thrashing. Then the guy—me—comes into Shitloads and starts trashing the rides, so some of my guys come out with pit bulls and shotguns and they shoot him in the head and then the dogs munch on his face while he's still conscious. Then he dies. Those special effects aren't cheap, man, but the kids appreciate it. Plus you seen my sign when you come in—'Drugs at the gate, I get to take.'"



Richard Sala

"The way I see it, it's the exact opposite of what these so-called watchdogs think it is. I'm, like, a positive role model—instead of being a total burnout, I went and made a pile of cash and helped my community. But like, if these naysayers or whatever get their way, it's, like, no more Survival Acre, no more Kid-in-the-Sack, and no more fun."

We head back to the midway, where we see a youngster in a jean jacket festooned with felt-tipped scrawlings that look like Celtic runes. Instead, they are the names of heavy-metal groups. He scampers around to the side of College World, a rather impressive spin-off of the old shooting arcades. Here, however, players with high-powered rifles and submachine guns position themselves at the tops of simulated college-campus buildings and, using paint pellets, pick off College Students on their way to classes or, in a different scenario, as they mingle at the Exclusive College Fraternity Toga Party. The boy we are watching glances furtively from side to side and then begins urinating on the building wall. Gary, with the stealth and self-assurance one would expect from a former security-guard floor commander at an enormous local mall ("The secret is NEVER let them get the upper hand," he confides), grabs the boy by the neck. "Yo, punk. You don't see me pissing on your house, do you?"

The boy hunches up under the pressure of Gary's nerve pinch. He is clearly surprised at being "busted" by the park's owner. "Whoa. Gary, man. Be cool."

"That piss contains natural acid, man, and acid damages. Gimme five bucks."

Belligerently, the boy pouts and crosses his arms over his narrow chest in a small moment of courageous defiance. But Gary is patient, and understands his patrons all too well. He keeps his tight grip on the boy's neck. After a minute, the boy shakes the hair out of his eyes and brushes away a tear, then digs deep into his tight jeans pocket for the fine. Gary lets him loose, repeating the warning from the ticket booth: "Check your attitude at the gate next time, dickhead." It is a fascinating scene, as though Gary's relationship to these children is just as much that of the disciplining older brother as the fun-dealer. The boy runs off, giving Gary the finger as he goes.

Gary shakes his head. "Kids, man."

I can't help but wonder aloud what Gary thinks of his customers, the consumers of fun. They are a pallid mob, shirking the sun for pinball or the twenty-four-hour Skee-Ball Stop, venturing out only to purchase a pack of cigarettes or another quart of paper-bag-encased beer-flavored soda. They look restless and edgy, yet there is no clear focus to their energy. These are the drifters of tomorrow, it seems, the unmotivated and uneducated. Their futures are dark, at best. I confess to Gary that they look like criminals to me—the people who will one day steal my Honda Civic for parts, then set what's left of it on fire somewhere along the Connecticut Turnpike. How, I wonder, does he relate to them?

"Let me tell you something, my friend," Gary says sharply. "These guys are just guys, you know, like me. And I seriously believe that within everyone's heart is the ability to do bad and good. Hell, I bet if you was hard up, you'd steal a car, too. The only difference between me and them is, they give me money and I take it.

It's a joke of mine, man—I go up to guys and say, 'Hey, what's the difference between you and me?' And they go, 'I don't know, Gary, what?' And I go, 'About ten million bucks!' Gary laughs at this and punches my arm.

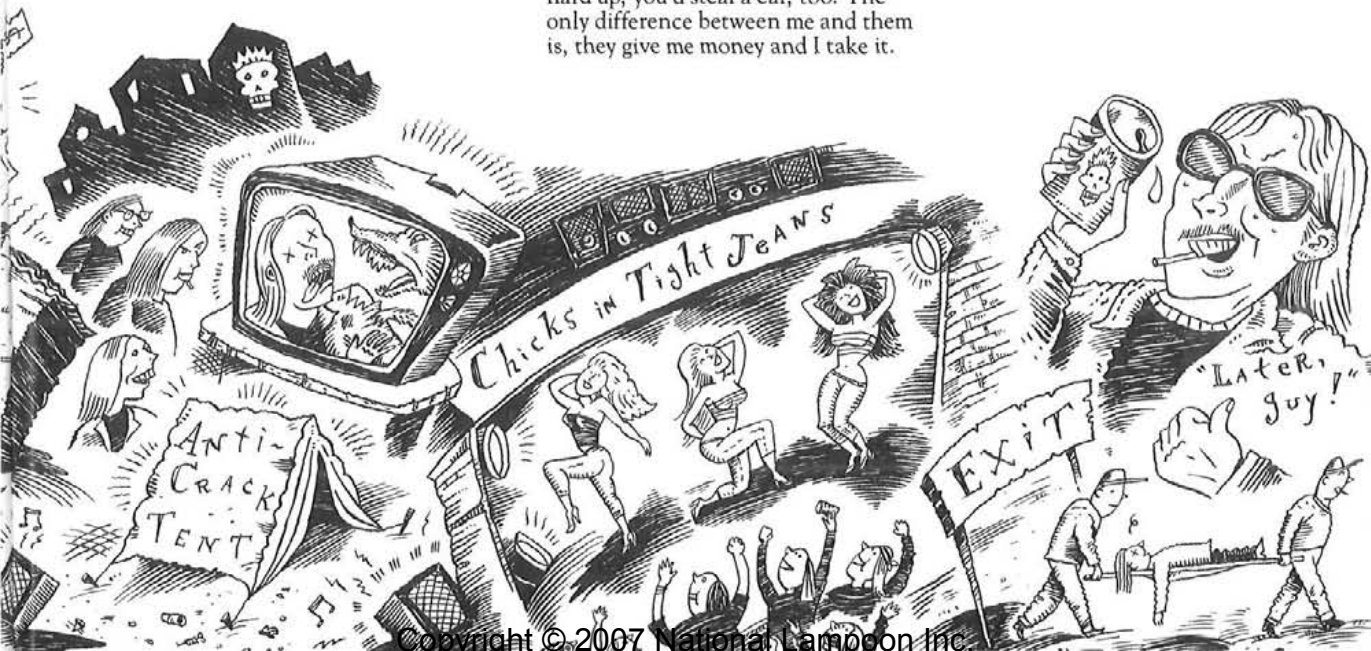
"But seriously, man. Pissin' on my building! Save it for the parking lot at least."



Our tour is almost up. We walk past Video Empire with its din of bleeps and blips, past the Cars on Parade exhibit, and over to the largest building on the premises—Shitloads of Fun Toys, the mammoth souvenir stand. Perhaps for a member of today's youth culture who is inured to the merchandising that pervades his whole life, Shitloads of Fun Toys is hardly garish or intrusive. But personally, I am stunned to see the acres of leather goods, studded collars and wristbands, thick metal rings, chains, necklaces, even a full-length poster with the legend "GARY RICKHAUSER... MASTER OF SHITLOADS"—all emblazoned with the flaming logo. When I come upon the special Shitloads of Fun tattoo stencil for patrons who, one assumes, have had so much fun that they're willing to give the park permanent endorsement on their bodies, I suggest to Gary that his hold over his customers is almost like that of a medieval prelate's over a throng of believers. His followers supplicate him with money, while he offers them relics from the temple/gift shop.

Gary bristles. "Relax, man, they're not your kids! You want somethin'? Dog collar? Chinese throwing star?"

CONTINUED ON PAGE 85



# BOUND for GLORY:

## *A Hostage Helper*

by Mark Steven Long

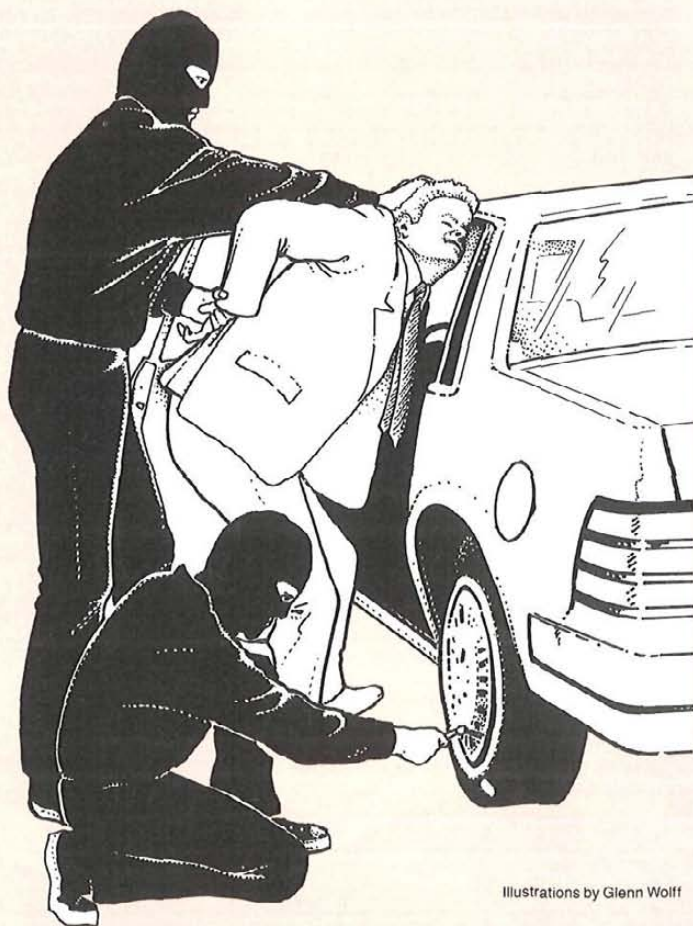
“Racist scum!  
Capitalist lackey!  
Ignorant tool of  
the Great Satan!”

Whether you're talking about a U.S. ambassador, an Exxon executive, or a seasoned journalist, the fact remains that Westerners aren't merely oppressors without souls. They also make very suitable hostages.

Everybody's taking hostages these days, and for many good reasons. How about you? Perhaps your friends have been imprisoned in a foreign jail by a freedom-hating, secular tyrant. Or you want to join the struggle for Third World self-determinism. Maybe you just have some time to kill. Whatever your reason, you might be surprised to find that there's more to taking a hostage than you think. These step-by-step instructions will help you keep your hostage, maintain his well-being—and still advance your agenda.

**1. Abducting the hostage.** Once you've decided whom to take hostage, you must plan a proper kidnapping. Keep in mind that an ideal abduction site enables you to grab your hostage with as little interference as possible.

Before any abduction, make sure your getaway car is in good working order. The shocks and suspension should be intact—a sudden jolt could damage your hostage, as well as any explosives you



Illustrations by Glenn Wolff

Low tire pressure can ruin an abduction—and lower your gas mileage.

might be carrying. If you want to avoid suspicion, affix a “Hebrew Union College” sticker to your rear window.

When you get your hostage in the car, blindfold and gag him immediately, then bind his arms and legs with stout rope to prevent any unnecessary squirming. As

you drive away, be sure to obey all traffic laws, if there are any—and don't forget to wear your seat belts!

**2. Notifying the media.** In today's information-intensive world, it is vitally important to alert the news agencies to



your hostage-taking as quickly as possible. Be sure to get the names of the journalists you talk to; they can serve as useful contacts when you take future hostages.

Proper identification is essential if you want to begin negotiations at a later date. Adopting a catchy group name—like the White Dawn of the Revolutionary Aesthetic, or the Children of a Lesser God—will ensure that your demands get the attention they deserve from the world media. (Some people prefer to use another group's name for the sake of expediency. While some names, such as Islamic Jihad, are in the public domain, you should check your country's copyright laws regarding trademark infringement.)

Remember, you're just taking credit at this point. If you need to state your demands, do so in clear and concise terms. Specify nationalities, currencies, and brand names. Patriotic or religious rhetoric should be kept to a minimum, especially if you're calling from a pay phone.

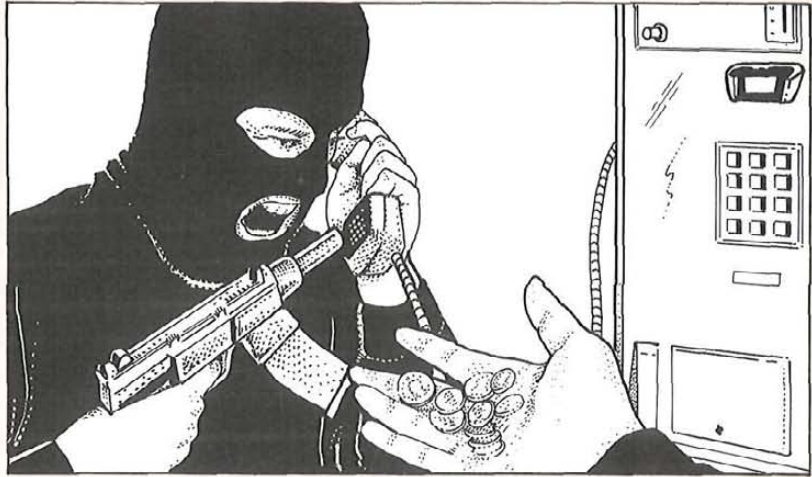
**3. Proper hostage care.** You've taken your hostage, and you've made it known to the world. Now it's time to attend to your hostage's daily needs while you wait for his country's reaction.

Hostages don't require much in the way of an optimal environment—merely a small, windowless room and a place to sleep, such as a cot or floor. They should be fed at least once a day—enough to keep them aware of their surroundings. Gruel should be a basic diet staple, although you can add rocks, pebbles, and other minerals to prolong digestion. This also helps your gruel supply last longer. You can feed your hostage meat once in a while, but not too often. (Too much fat can be bad for the heart.)

**4. Entertainment.** Hostages enjoy fun and games as much as anyone, and it doesn't hurt to let them have an occasional hour or so of merriment. There are many things you can do to bring a tiny sliver of joy into your hostage's life.

Simple games are the best; your hostage can get immense enjoyment from playing "I Spy" in his small, windowless room. Or, in a more serious vein, you can keep his mind sharp with intensive instruction in the doctrines of your organization.

Television provides another good source of entertainment, and your local video store should be able to supply the kind of programming your hostage likes. But even if you can't get *Dorf on Golf*, don't fret—just keep showing your hos-



Remember: calling cards can be traced. *Always use cash.*



Feeding games add spice to mealtimes and can bring you and your hostage closer.



Entertainment maintains your hostage's awareness of the irony of his situation.



Your hostage isn't going anywhere! Take the time to get the shot right.



During long negotiations, keep yourself—and your adversary—diverted.

rage the videotape of his family's tear-stained appeal for his release. He'll be grateful to you for it!

**5. Videotaping your hostage.** After making your demands, you will be expected to prove that you are, in fact, holding the hostage. Making a videotape of your hostage is an efficient way of doing just that.

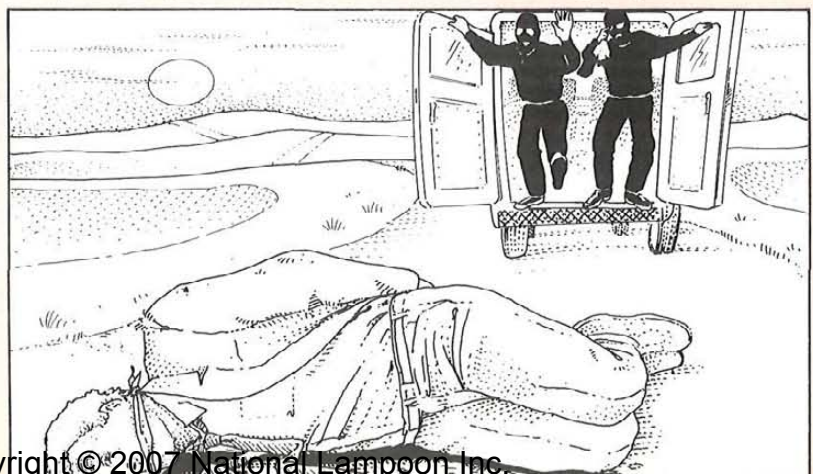
Proper lighting will prominently display your hostage's best qualities. By training klieg lights directly on him, you can highlight the contrast between the ghostly pallor of his face and the black bags under his eyes. Of course, your hostage should wear his original clothing. Make sure it has been laundered only occasionally—just enough to prevent it from rotting.

It's best to set your video camera to record in the "SP" mode; this ensures high quality in both picture and sound. You'll be able to capture all the finer details, from your hostage's shaking hands to his labored breathing, and thus increase your audience's appreciation of your work.

And don't forget—before wrapping the videocassette for mailing, make sure you remove the erasure-protection tab!

**6. Negotiations.** At last—the moment toward which all your time and efforts have been directed. This is where the hard work and care you've invested in your hostage begin to pay off—literally!

Give yourself a quiet farewell moment before accelerating away.



You should spend the first few days bandying words with your opposing negotiator, and assessing his strengths and weaknesses. Keep him off balance by mixing impossible demands with ones that are easy to meet—for example, you can ask for ten million dollars in uncut South African diamonds, complete amnesty for all political prisoners, and a cigarette.

It's important that you continually emphasize the historical, political, and economic abuses that have forced you to take your hostage. You may want to supplement your recital with documents, charts, and graphs. Be as thorough as possible, and don't be afraid to take up several hours to present your facts. If you feel the time was well spent, you may repeat your presentation the following day.

Above all else, be prepared to say "yes" to your opponent's offers. Don't expect to get *everything* you want—some things have to be given up so you can get what you really need. And if you *don't* get everything you need, you can always take your opponent hostage.

**7. Saying goodbye.** Like all good things that come to an end, you'll have to free your hostage one day. Many people think their hostages will always be with them, but that just isn't so. Inevitably, your demands will be met, or you will find it necessary to make a "humanitarian" gesture so you can stay in the public eye.

It's best that you and your hostage part as quickly as possible. Knock him unconscious with a two-by-four, and drive around until you find a convenient place to dump him.


Once your hostage has been released, you can congratulate yourself on a job well done. With your grit and determination, you have advanced your cause and built up your self-esteem. And before you know it, you'll be taking another hostage!



# National Lampoon's EDITOR-FOR-A-DAY CONTEST WINNER: Sheryl Tyreen!



Overall, I think it would be a challenge to be the editor-for-a-day of the National Lampoon, a magazine that I have always loved. But most of all, I think it would be a lot of fun and really interesting."  
—Excerpted from the essay "Why I Want to Be the Editor of the National Lampoon" by Sheryl Tyreen

 "Your directions were perfect!" shouts Sheryl Tyreen as our photographer greets her. "Help me with this equipment!" he shouts back.

The response to our Editor-for-a-Day Contest was overwhelming, and the judges were hard-pressed to choose a single winner from the thousands of entries that flooded our offices. But, in the final analysis, Sheryl Tyreen's essay, "Why I Want to Be the Editor of the National Lampoon," seemed to exemplify our commitment to thought-provoking, quality humor—though in retrospect, some sort of interview or informal screening procedure might have given us a truer sense of all the candidates and their intentions, not just Sheryl's.

As we obligated ourselves to do at the beginning of the contest, we now publish our account of Sheryl Tyreen's day at the helm of America's Humor Magazine.

Sheryl approached her task with, as she put it, "a lot of anticipation and a little fear." As Sheryl also started her day late—9:15—perhaps we should have been the fearful ones. Of course, the six-hour bus commute from Sheryl's home in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, might have daunted even the most committed staff member. In any case, there were no hard feelings to greet her when Sheryl finally did arrive—just plenty of work and a clean desk top on which to do it.

Reading through the "slush pile" of unsolicited manuscripts may be considered one of the most important, if least glam-

orous, tasks in an otherwise exciting position. Thus, some were surprised to find our new editor dozing after having read just three of the several hundred short stories, parody ads, and cartoon submissions collected by these offices daily. Perhaps, it was suggested, she was on medication. "No," quipped Sheryl, "they just, well, they weren't very, you know, funny." Of course not, we laughed along, or why would we need to read them at all? But the joke was somehow lost.

Perhaps even more important than the day-to-day handling of the slush is the delicate handling of fragile egos and interpersonal relationships within the office. As in any demanding, creative occupation, the private difficulties in the lives of editors and artists are often magnified by the strains of work. To keep things flowing smoothly, it is important that the editor in chief always be available to his or her staff members. So when one of our high-strung editors, whom we will call Kris Marcal, knocked on Sheryl's door at 10:30, we knew she would finally get the challenge she so convincingly begged us for in her essay.

It was no surprise that what Kris wanted was a cash advance, and went so far as to shed tears during his impassioned plea to get it. Stories of his drinking and "girl problems" are legion among *National Lampoon* staffers. What was surprising, however, was Sheryl's rather un-editor-like reac-

Photos by Harry Heleotis

tion: confused laughter at first, then concern, then more confusion. Was he serious? she asked. Indeed he was, and was prepared to prove it by leaping from her window, ten stories above a glass-strewn parking lot. But no need—a solution was quickly reached when Sheryl managed to come up with the advance, despite vice president/controller Walter Garibaldi's refusal to give Marcal "one goddamn cent—he's already into us for his next four paychecks." Apparently, Sheryl found the goodness in her heart to dig into her own pockets for Marcal's money. Though unorthodox, her successful solution was toasted by staff members for several nights following—ironically, with drinks her own money paid for!

At 11:15, we all gathered in the *National Lampoon* conference room for a cover meeting. Such meetings, though informal in nature, serve an indispensable purpose: to create the perfect combination of image and words that, when displayed on the magazine's cover, convey humor, satire, and intelligence, and will thus convince the casual magazine-rack browser to pick up and purchase a copy of *National Lampoon*. In this task, the editor in chief plays the most important part, bringing to the discussion not only ideas but a strong sense of editorial purpose and a deep understanding of how the cover should be used to say, "Read me—I am America's Humor Magazine."

Make no mistake, our editor-for-a-day certainly had ideas. At first, however, she seemed unclear as to her role in the ideation process. Only after it was brought to her attention that no one else had even the vaguest inkling of an effective cover was she pressed into action. "Umm, what about a picture that's from the point of view of a baby?" she suggested. "And it's looking up from the crib at all these huge, grotesque adult faces."

"And how would the cover copy read?" contributing editor Victor Thersites gently prodded, hoping, as we all were, that within the text would lie the "zinger."

"Well," she continued tentatively, "what about something like 'Oh, Baby!' or 'Let Me Back Inside!'"

"Let me back inside," Thersites repeated to himself, shaking his head rather incredulously. "Do you mean like 'let me back inside the womb?'"

"Eeeyeah... I guess so."

But before a careful dissection of the idea could fully ensue, publisher Michael Druckman entered the room, quickly introducing himself to the new editor and demanding a final cover decision immediately. "We were supposed to have a cover two weeks ago—what the hell's it gonna be?"

"We were waiting for the new editor in chief," said Kris Marcal, winking at Sheryl.

"Yeah, so?" Druckman shot back. "What's the cover?"

Eager to please, Thersites nodded toward the chief-for-a-day and said, "Well, she had an idea."

"It hasn't really been fully worked out..." Sheryl shyly interjected.

"I don't have all day, lady."

So she described her idea of a picture from the point of view of a baby in a crib with grotesque-looking adults leaning over it, and the cover lines that were to read: "Oh, Baby!" or "Let Me Back Inside!"

"I don't get it. Are we trying to create the new, unfunny *National Lampoon*?" Druckman's words dripped with sarcasm, and we all laughed for several minutes as a red-faced Sheryl tried to regain her composure.

"My thoughts exactly, Mike," Victor oozed.

"Couldn't have said it better if you'd written it out for me, M.D.," croaked Kris. "I didn't think it was funny at all."

"Unfunny *National Lampoon*!" echoed a doubled-over Ned

Ward. "God, I wish we could put *that* on the cover, Mike."

"Well, I need a cover tomorrow A.M. at the absolute latest." The publisher left, and as we refocused our attention on the matter at hand, we were all somewhat shocked by the deeply injured expression on Sheryl's face. Could it be that she had not fully been prepared for the dog-eat-dog, survival-of-the-fittest ethos of big-money humor publishing? Or the importance of supporting a powerful man like the publisher in his day-to-day decision-making? Surely not, we agreed. Toadying up to the publisher is a fact of life among top editors everywhere. It must have been something Sheryl ate.

Or didn't eat, as it turned out! For when the meeting finally came to a close, Sheryl confessed to being "famished—I haven't eaten anything since I left Harrisburg at about 3:00 this morning."

Of course, no editor's life would be complete without the working lunch, and on this occasion, lunch was our treat at one of New York's famous downtown restaurants, the West-side Coffee Shop. Dining with Sheryl was *NatLamp* vice president Howard Jurofsky. Their topic of discussion: advertising inserts, an issue of particular interest to most editors in chief. But, apparently, not to Sheryl, who, though confessing in her essay to "love" the magazine, seemed to have a hard time showing it.

As Jurofsky reported later, "I told her we had some advertisers who were all hot and bothered since we were putting inserts in every book even though we were moving about a quarter million a month, and so I got a napkin and drew her a picture of the kinds of numbers we could be looking at in a best- and worst-case scenario, and right then her eyes start glazing over like doughnuts! Oh, man, I lost it!"

Needless to say, if we'd known exactly how lunch was to proceed, we would have warned Sheryl about Mr. Jurofsky's celebrated temper. As it is, we must emphasize that his state-



ments do not reflect the views of *National Lampoon* as a corporate entity. And we wish to extend our deepest apologies to the other diners at the Westside Coffee Shop. In regard to the duties of the editor in chief, however, it seems Jurofsky did have some valid points. Nevertheless, considering the fierceness of Jurofsky's reprimand, we were not as put out as we might have been when Sheryl returned to the office several minutes late ("I... I needed to take a walk" was her excuse). Yet the apparent erosion of her commitment did raise some eyebrows.

Our contest promised "excitement," and perhaps we should have been clearer that some of it might be unforeseen. Just the same, an editor must answer to readers and writers alike, though most readers probably do not hunt deer with a swagger stick as does frequent contributor Mark Walters. Certain cuts in a recent piece of fiction he had composed did not sit well with the temperamental writer, and he wished to take his complaints "to the top." At first surprised to find a new face in the editor in chief's office, Walters immediately demanded a quick appraisal of Sheryl's literary credentials.

"Editor-for-a-day?" he repeated in disbelief. "Somebody has tampered with my work and the only one I can talk to is the editor-for-a-day?" Indeed, he was piqued beyond reason. But to Walters's credit, he was perfectly willing to dispense with the notion of "contest winner" and accurately identify Sheryl as the appropriate repository of blame in such tricky editorial situations.

The tirade lasted a full forty minutes as Walters stalked back and forth in front of the editor's desk, picking up heavy objects, feeling their weight in his hands, and then putting them back down. Yet contrary to previous indications, Sheryl remained calmly intractable in her support of the editorial position of this magazine. "I guess something just snapped inside me," she said later. "I wasn't about to give that S.O.B.



**☑ Lunching with Howard Jurofsky, a wag once quipped, is like eating poison. Sheryl gets a quick lesson on advertising inserts from the didactic vice president.**

one ounce of satisfaction. And that's true for anyone else who thinks they can push around the boss-for-a-day." At last, Walters stormed out, sadder but, one hopes, wiser.

It seemed a marvelous change had taken place in our editor-for-a-day, as though all she had needed was a hot lunch and a little push to get her fully in the swing of things. Quick to capitalize on Sheryl's newfound spine, we approached her with a task that had long been left undone.

"Come into my office, John," Sheryl said over the office intercom, "and close the door behind you." John Pederson was a six-year veteran in the art department whose asthmatic wheezing and hawking—a direct result of prolonged exposure to noxious art-supply chemicals necessary to magazine production—had made his presence nearly intolerable. He was badly in need of firing, but his lengthy tenure with America's Humor Magazine made his dismissal difficult at best, as did his failing health and tragic personal life (John's children, both hemophiliacs, coincidentally, need a very expensive operation in order to live). It was a delicate situation that required firm yet gentle handling—we all loved our John deeply, and his sacrifices for the magazine were evident with each wet cough, but we also knew his time had come. It was hoped that he might be convinced his departure from the magazine would only be good for everyone, including himself. Sheryl seemed to have different ideas about the proper handling of such sensitive personnel issues.

"You're shit-canned, compadre," she said before the office door had completely shut. "You've got more phlegm in your lungs than air, pal, and it's driving everyone nuts."

"But my children..."

"Are probably every bit as disgusted as we are," Sheryl said, finishing John's sentence. "You ought to just check into a clean little hospice somewhere and pull the covers over your head. Now hit the bricks, Mr. Gurgle."

As Pederson shuffled out, a path was cleared for him to his drafting board, where he sat down in stony silence, until some moments later when he leaned forward with his snotslick head in his hands and wept ever so softly—like rain on a mossy rock. Meanwhile, Sheryl stepped triumphantly from her office.

"Time for some changes," she announced imperially. "First of all, turn off that music." Sheryl pointed a long finger at Debbie, the assistant editor who derives a certain energy from the constant absorption of classic rock 'n' roll music. "Now then..." She stopped in midsentence and cocked her head. "Who's that crying? Dammit, who's turned on the waterworks?"

Eager to please, Victor Thersites stepped forward. "I believe it's John Pederson, ma'am."

**☑ Publisher Michael Druckman asks for clarification on Sheryl's ideas for the next cover while the editors enjoy the exchange. Druckman, they agree, is a genius with people.**





**3 Crying on the job? It beats hawking up gobs of phlegm. The new Sheryl seemed more than happy to let Pederson go.**

"Shut up, Thersites, you craven mackerel. I'm taking your name off the masthead. Somebody tell Pederson to pipe down." A dozen underlings rushed off to silence the former employee. "Now then, I'm very tired. I'm going to take a nap. Don't bother me."

And with that, the editor-for-a-day returned to her office and quietly shut the door behind her. Was this the "fun" Sheryl had been looking for in this job? We couldn't be sure, and none were willing to wake her up to find out. But no matter, she emerged "refreshed" after a forty-five-minute snooze.

"What's next on my agenda? More firings? Remodeling the reception area, perhaps?" she asked dryly.

We laughed. No, no; now it was time to meet the advertisers.

Howard Jurofsky took Sheryl into the large conference room and introduced her to the assembled advertisers—the veritable lifeblood of any magazine. Helping to form a bridge between the commercial and creative halves of the magazine, the editor must be attentive to the wishes of advertisers, just as she is attentive to the wishes of her readers. Therefore, she must make frequent reports to the advertisers in regard to the magazine's current direction, its contents, and its profits. As fate would have it, Sheryl's day at the helm neatly coincided with the monthly report to the advertisers.

Sheryl seemed filled with strong emotions when Howard informed her that it was her duty as editor in chief to make such a report. "Report to the advertisers," she hissed. "This is unbelievable!" Then, giving what may have been a meaningful glance to Jurofsky, she said, "All right, pal, I'll give you a report to the advertisers."

And with that, Sheryl Tyreen, the editor-for-a-day from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, made a presentation not soon to be forgotten. "A magazine that nurtures the prurient fantasies of adolescent minds and tries to pass itself off as 'humor' is no magazine for any decent, upright advertisers—you ought to be ashamed," she began, and then launched into an account of her day as editor in chief of America's Humor Magazine, using such terms as "fraudulent," "frightening," and "rude." Effortlessly, it seemed, she then extemporized a rather moving rant against the magazine in general, saying, in part, "This magazine isn't funny, it's sick, and insidiously promotes all that's wrong with America today: racism, sexism, homophobia, and reactionary politics. What was once an irreverent, thoughtful compendium of the country's best satire has become a blackened, desiccated thing—like a comic banana peel left too long in the sun."

Fortunately, the advertisers weren't really listening, and before Sheryl's words had even begun to penetrate the thick cloud of cigar smoke and liquor fumes, Jurofsky and publisher Michael Druckman managed to wrestle her to the floor and drag her out of the room. That this would be the strange end of an editor who had previously conveyed such a strong desire to lead seemed to take everyone by surprise, as so much of Sheryl's short reign had.

"Well," said Druckman, "I think you've done plenty for one day, Sheryl. Time to take that silver slug back to Harrisburg."

"Druckman," our erstwhile chief snapped, "I'm still editor of this book, and no editor I know takes a bus anywhere. Go call the wife and kids and tell 'em you're off on a road trip tonight. You're driving me home, little man."

Reluctantly, yet wishing to avoid any further breach of workplace decorum, Michael Druckman did as he was told, and the last we saw of our editor-for-a-day was the back of her head as she rode off toward the Keystone State in a flashy green Jaguar with Druckman behind the wheel.

And so ended a special, wondrous day. A day of heartfelt excitement with a new face and, we'd like to think, a new friend. Of course, there were those of us who felt the day had somehow veered sharply from the expected routine, almost disappointingly so. Consequently, there will be no further contests. Nevertheless, our time with Sheryl was important to us, and as she was driven off into the New York sunset, we mused, "A comic banana peel"—hmmm, there may be a cover idea here after all."

*Excelsior, Sheryl Tyreen!* ■

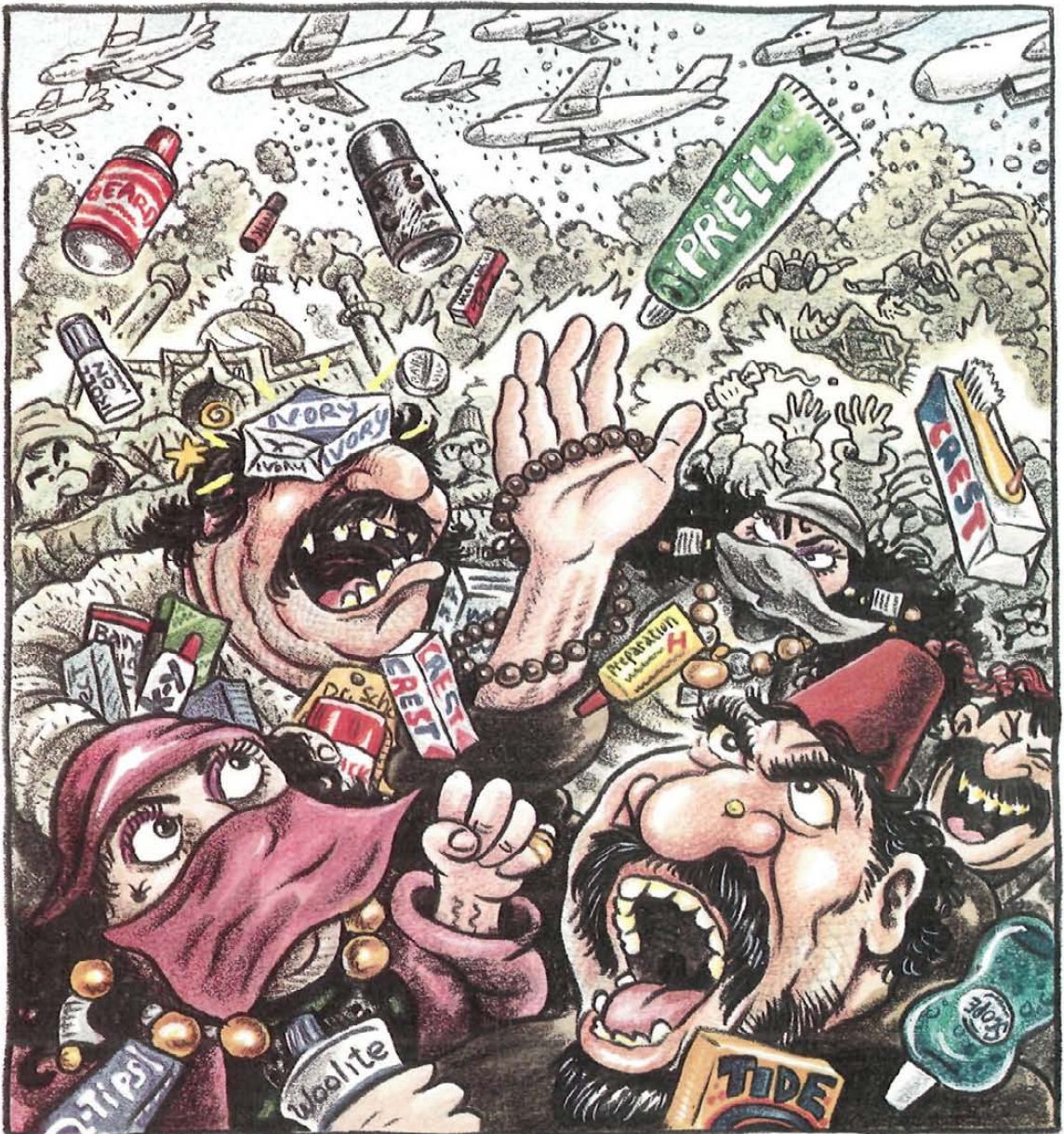


**7 Driving Miss Tyreen! Publisher Druckman memorizes the directions back to Harrisburg as Sheryl, a long day behind her, dictates.**

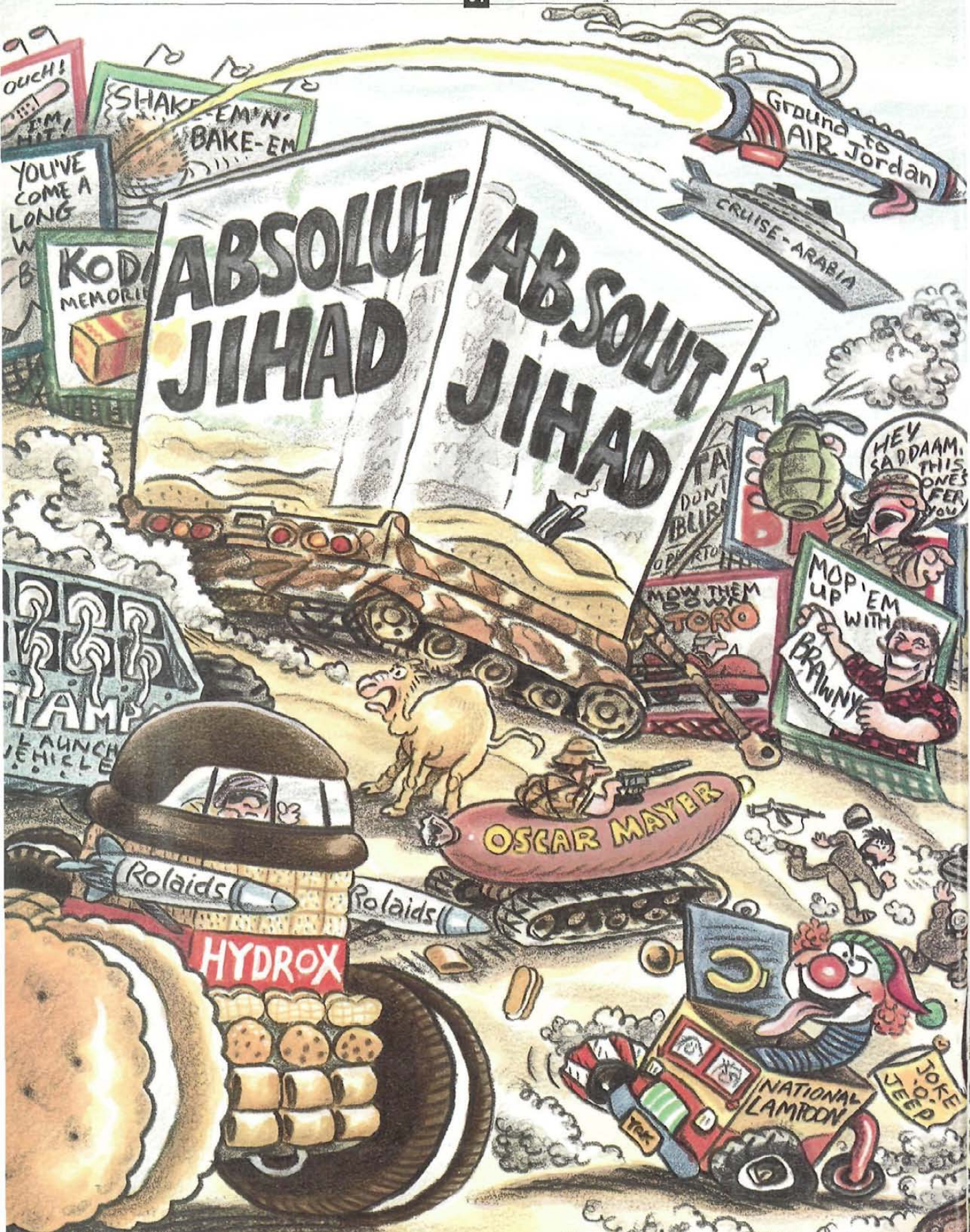
Times are tough. Some institutions are morally bankrupt. Others are literally bankrupt. Most are both. It's time to turn to those that form the bedrock of our society. Not the *people*, of course: I'm talking about the marketers. *They're* the ones who can fund our war effort! Once they realize that armed conflict offers unlimited opportunities for free advertising, they're bound to try and make a profit on...

THE personal-hygiene industry jumped at the chance to finance this carpet bombing of downtown Baghdad—and to promote their products by delivering samples into the outstretched hands (some still attached to stretched-out bodies) of many potential customers. After an air raid, who wouldn't want to shampoo the dust and cinders from his matted hair, or rinse shrapnel and other debris from his tattered djellabah? And if a benevolent corporation happens to make kabobs out of 100,000 big Baghdaddies—well, who's counting? When is cleanliness closer to godliness than in a holy war?

# OPERATION DESERT SALES



by Rick Meyerowitz  
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LOW Rents of Arabia! Billboards for sale! Put 'em anywhere. No highway-beautification laws to abide by—no highway! Just an ocean of sand you could lose a tank division in, but not anymore. Thanks to participating patriotic corporations, our armor stands out like a camel in a sandbox. Our brightly colored forces can be seen at five thousand meters in a sandstorm. (Or from a MIG-23 at fifty miles.) Why should the enemy be the only one to target an audience?





**T**EAMWORK. It's as American as your Sony Walkman. An inspiring example is shown here: two great companies working together to clothe and arm our boys for no charge (the exposure is enough). It brings tears to our hearts, and makes our eyes swell with pride. L. L. Bean has outfitted an entire division with these 100 percent-geese-down insulated outfits, and hand-sewn each soldier into his suit for a perfect fit. Gore-Tex lamination makes them impervious to nerve gas—and rain.

Thanks to Cuisinart, they're well armed with deluxe-model M-15 processors. Equipped with variable speeds, the M-15 "Hellfire" is best used for combat "mano a mano." Watch out for the grating disk, Saddam!

Here, a thirsty patrol comes upon an oasis courtesy of Earth's first soft drink. Too bad those suits don't come off, boys!

# BLACKIE THE LAWYER DOG

Blackie

CROWTHER, TARKINGTON,  
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February 24, 1991

Mr. William Hackley  
c/o Simon & Schuster  
1230 Avenue of the Americas  
New York, N.Y. 10020

Dear Mr. Hackley:

We are now authorized to release the files of our late partner, Blackie, with one caveat: that you submit quotations from his files for our approval before inclusion in your biographical manuscript. You will, of course, appreciate that this material is of a very confidential nature, and we are sure we may rely upon you to keep it so.

As a junior partner in our firm, Blackie headed the Mergers and Acquisitions department. His work was masterly. He dismantled inefficient giants, and helped create leaner, stronger companies. He pioneered the concepts of the leveraged buy-out, the Pac-Man defense, and, much later, the Super Mario Bros. defense. We were delighted to make him senior partner at the then-unprecedented age of nine.

Undoubtedly, you are more interested in Blackie's later career as adviser at the highest national and international levels. For my part, let me emphasize that though he gained a certain amount of fame (he would have said notoriety), he never sought it. Blackie felt he was merely doing his duty to country and party.

On a more personal level, Blackie dressed without flash. His face and stooped shoulders seemed to reflect the worries of the world. He won his cases, not through courtroom theatrics, but through his mastery of the facts. He was excellent with children.

"He clasps the crag with crooked hands;  
Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
Ring'd with the azure world, he stands.  
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;  
He watches from his mountain walls,  
And like a thunderbolt he falls."

Tennyson, "The Eagle"

Before Blackie's sad and appallingly premature death, I enjoyed the good fortune of being his colleague and friend. In the words of Joubert, "The more one comes to know men, the more one comes to admire the dog." Do, therefore, let me know if you have any questions or problems with which you feel we may be able to help.

Yours faithfully,

*William A. Crowther*  
William A. Crowther, Esq.

CROWTHER, TARKINGTON,  
RHODES & BLACKIE  
Attorneys-at-Law

October 5, 1979

TO: Office Manager  
FROM: Blackie  
RE: Office Design

As the newly anointed head of Mergers and Acquisitions, I am aware of the vital role office design plays in influencing new clients and prospective employees. Therefore, a certain amount of special attention will be needed to reconcile my individual needs with an overall design scheme.

As you know, I am only 23 1/2" tall, and have difficulty reaching most standard doorknobs, let alone turning them. Therefore, a small hinged flap, dimensions roughly 11" x 12 1/2", should be placed at the very bottom of my door, enabling me to



Mr. Courtney Granholm III  
Editor in Chief  
GQ  
350 Madison Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10017

November 20, 1979

Dear Mr. Granholm:

Regretfully, I must decline your proposed cover profile, "Doggie Style - Blackie Attends the Reagan Inaugural Ball." I am flattered by the idea, but I am a lawyer first and foremost. Nor do I think that your readers would find yet another tux-wearing lawyer particularly novel, no matter what his appearance.

However, I look forward to your other coverage of this gala event.

Sincerely,

CROWTHER, TARKINGTON,  
RHODES & BLACKIE  
Attorneys-at-Law

One Greenmail Place  
New York, N.Y. 10040  
212-555-1034

August 22, 1988

Mr. Lorne Michaels  
Studio 8H  
NBC  
30 Rockefeller Plaza  
New York, N.Y. 10112

Dear Mr. Michaels:

I am most grateful for your letter of July 10 asking me to host the December 14 episode of *Saturday Night Live*, with the musical guests "those dogs who bark 'Jingle Bells.'"

Unfortunately, my heavy schedule does not permit my taking the time. Furthermore, I feel my performance would be a disservice to your show - though you are kind to say that the audience "would be surprised to see it done at all."

Once again, thanks for thinking of me.

Very sincerely,

EXPENSE ACCOUNT VOUCHER

DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
1-18-84 Eastern Shuttle - Boston (round trip)	\$109.00
Limousine - Logan - Cambridge (with tip)	75.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>184.00</b>

PURPOSE: Affirmative Action Symposium  
Harvard Law School  
NAME: Blackie  
SIGNED:

CROWTHER, TARKINGTON,  
RHODES & BLACKIE  
Attorneys-at-Law

January 8, 1991

TO: Staff  
FROM: Blackie  
RE: Retirement

My imminent retirement has certainly been the worst kept secret ever. Yet I want to tell you all officially that I shall be retiring at the end of March. The time is drawing nigh for your friendly barrister and his spouse to stop and sniff the roses proves irresistible. Linda and I are truly looking forward to spending more time together - and, needless to say, with our son involved with the firm in my role as consultant. I would like you to know how very much I have enjoyed our association during the many years we have been doing business together. Remember: old lawyers never die - they just go through the motions!

R:ep

EXPENSE ACCOUNT VOUCHER

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
1-5-84	"21" Club Glenfiddich Tenderloin (raw)	\$64 25 35
TOTAL		8960

PURPOSE Dinner, J. Gutfreund Salomon Bros  
NAME Blackie

EXPENSE ACCOUNT VOUCHER

DATE	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT
1-6-84	Windows on the World Glenfiddich Steak Tartare	\$73.50 23.15
TOTAL		96.65

SIGNED

CROWTHER, TARKINGTON,  
RHODES & BLACKIE  
Attorneys-at-Law  
One Greenmail Place  
New York, N.Y. 10040  
212-555-1054



The Honorable Kimba M. Wood  
U.S. District Judge  
U.S. District Court  
Foley Square  
40 Centre Street  
New York, N.Y. 10007

Dear Judge Wood:

As Michael Milken's sentencing nears, I must add my voice to those pleading for leniency on his behalf.

As I mentioned to Nicholas Brady just the other day, Michael Milken is without a doubt one of the most talented, inventive, and trustworthy individuals I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. A strong America, made so by its entrepreneurial spirit and dynamic economy, brought the world a new era of peace—and Michael Milken led the charge.

Please show mercy to this fine American.

Very sincerely,



Fay Vincent  
Commissioner of Major League Baseball  
30 Park Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10022

Dear Fay:  
With George Steinbrenner's sentencing a scant two weeks away, my voice to those pleading for leniency on his behalf.  
As I mentioned to Hart Giamatti shortly before his untimely death, Steinbrenner is without a doubt one of the most talented, trustworthy individuals I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. A strong America, made so by its entrepreneurial spirit and dynamic economy, brought the world a new era of peace—and George Steinbrenner led the charge.

CROWTHER, TARKINGTON,  
RHODES & BLACKIE  
Attorneys-at-Law

January 15, 1991

TO: Bill Crowther  
FROM: Blackie  
RE: Suicide

Dear Bill,

First off, I want you to know that my deep affection for you remains. You have been my mentor and friend, and my gratitude is eternal.

There is no one single event that has brought me to this. True, Linda and I have had our troubles, but I have never thought they were insurmountable. But I do not think the effort is in me for this or any other task.

I have fought very hard for all I have and, having achieved it, I am very tired. I always felt I was fighting not only for myself but against prejudice, but I don't know if that fight can ever be won. (You yourself, Bill, said that young Reed was "dogging it" just the other day.)

More to the point, Bill, it's just time. I can feel it. It's far better to put oneself to sleep than to require others to make that sad decision for you.

Please think kindly of me, and forgive me.

Blackie

"It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." (Matthew 15:26)

ALL DOGS GO TO HEAVEN?  
BLACKIE, THE VENTURE CAPITALIST (1974-1991)  
FEBRUARY 4, 1991  
THREE DOLLARS SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

# Forbes



Lou Carbone

Photos by Michael Chan

# AUGGIE'S CALLING

by Mark  
Walters



I NEVER KNEW WHAT POSSESSED MY COUSIN AUGUSTUS to give up farming and become a mime. Maybe he was undercutting the south forty one afternoon and the wind was blowing and the dirt was caking up on his wet lips and sweat was running in tiny rivers down his broad back and catching in the waistband of his underwear and maybe even seeping onto his heavy buttocks, and maybe about that time he just thought to himself that there had to be something more for a man to do with his life. Maybe he just thought that he would like to stop the tractor and climb down to the broken earth and lay his thick and sunburned hands against the air as if he were trapped, trapped in a glass box. Maybe he wanted to free himself through silent artistry while traffic hissed along Interstate a half-mile from where he stood.

But no one in our family really knew what would possess a 240-pound man to one day trade in his Big Smiths and boots for black leotards and a pair of Chinese cotton shoes. But he did it. He even warned us.

"I'm through farming," he announced after Sunday dinner at Grandma Oelke's, and he passed his hand through the air like he was wiping off the top of a dresser. We all sat and looked at him for a minute and then went back to our strudel and coffee, because I don't think anyone really took Augustus seriously: he was a big man, and unless a big man says something about a football score or how you were accidentally drinking his beer or generally annoying him, then usually what he's got to say doesn't get much attention, even if it's personal and heartfelt. "I'm serious," he said. "I'm going to become a mime." And then he belched a little out of the side of his mouth.

We all laughed, of course, and then my uncle Ernie, who was leaning back in his chair and who had his Sunday-suit pants unbuttoned and unzipped to allow for easier breathing after mid-meal, slapped Augustus on the shoulder.

"Don't touch me!" Augustus screamed. "Ain't none of you understand what I feel!" And then he banged his fist



on the table so hard all the silverware jumped a good three inches and Aunt Fern's glasses fell into the gravy boat. Augustus sat there trembling with his eyes hot and wet and his fist raised above the table to repeat the blow and no one moved, not even Uncle Ernie, who'd obviously had his feelings hurt by the rebuff and now sat with his lips working silently and his throat growing pink in irregular splotches.

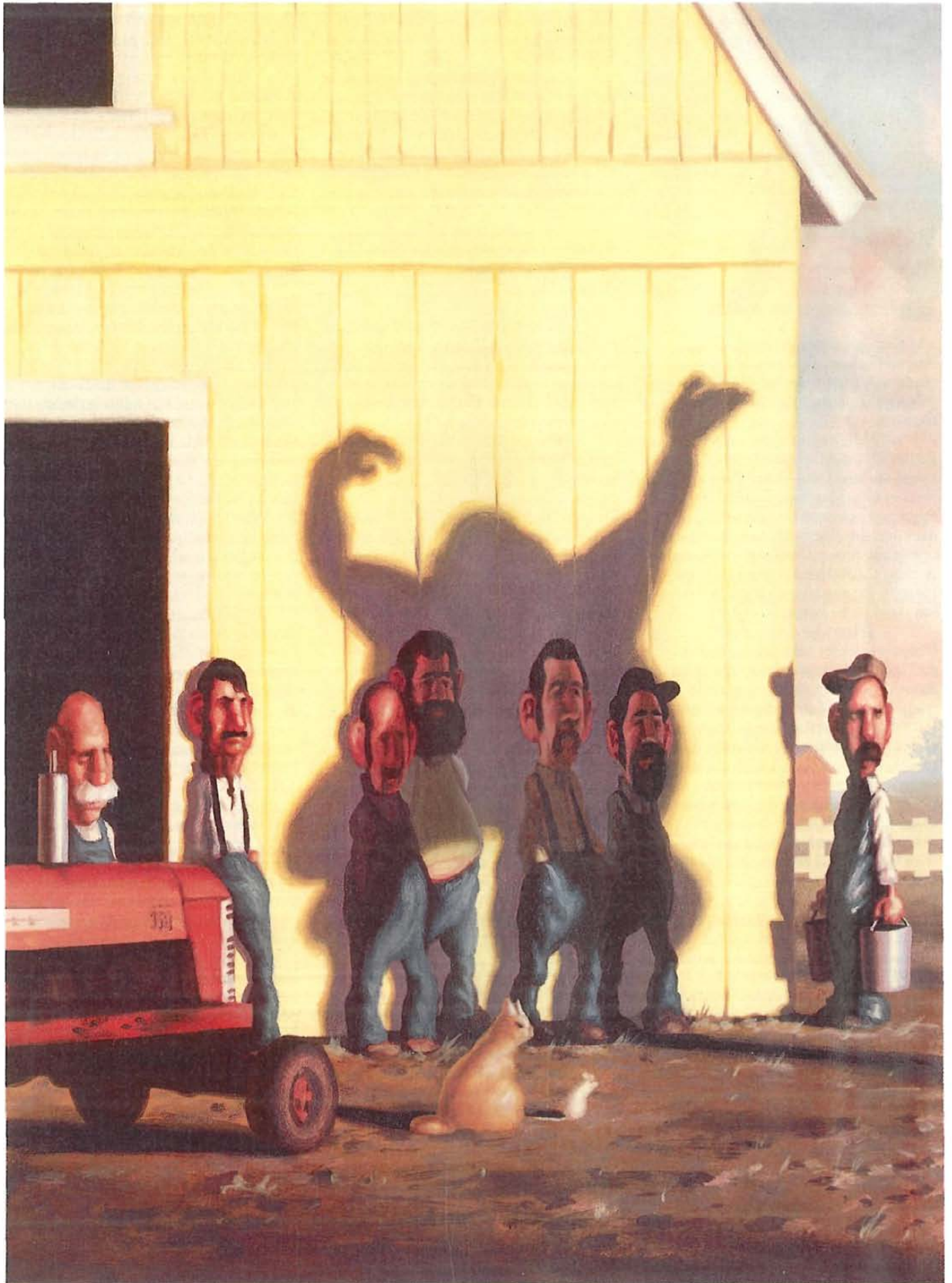
After a moment Augustus called us all ignorant and stalked from the room, his broad back quivering and his ears aflame with rage. We went back to our strudel and coffee again

because we all knew Cousin Augustus as a man easily provoked, a man impetuous and proud, and because half of us weren't quite sure just what a mime was in the first place.

We found out, though, the next morning at the co-op.

"Lookit here!" Roman Weisner shouted from the entrance to the grain elevator. He was standing with his arms akimbo and tossing his head in the direction of the driveway as if he were trying to work a kink out of his neck. "Lookit here!" he said. And sure enough when we looked we saw Cousin Augustus wearing a black leotard and pulling an imaginary rope in front of a shiny red auger.

"What in Sam Hill..." my father said, and then he took off his glasses and rubbed his eyes. My brother and sister and I took off our glasses and rubbed our eyes too,



Jim Bennett



and then my sister shouted, "Hey, Auggie!" about three times, but Cousin Augustus ignored her and went right on pulling his invisible rope.

Well, pretty soon a crowd gathered—mostly young men in sweat-stained John Deere caps and old men in clean but faded overalls that stretched across their bellies and gaped at the side buttons—and everyone stood around making low sounds in their throats and staring at Augustus with expressions that ranged from amusement to outrage.

"What's he doing now?"

Chester Giebler asked; he asked it real quietly and out of the side of his mouth, like Augustus was a rattlesnake that should not be disturbed.

"He's putting boxes up on a closet shelf," someone whispered, and then everyone nodded and made some more low sounds in their throats. But Cousin Augustus stopped and glared at us, his eyes black with disgust behind his white-painted face, and then he resumed pushing his hands up into the air and springing about and it occurred to me that he was really keeping a big ball or balloon in play by smacking it up into the sky. I announced this and everyone looked sort of startled and then relieved and then old man Dinkel, who had great tufts of gray hair growing from his ears, said, "By golly, so he is," and I pumped my fists over my head like a triumphant prizefighter. Augustus, meanwhile, continued to hop about, his enormous beer-fed belly surging upward against the black nylon and then plummeting, almost in slow motion itself.

Pretty soon, though, the men heard their fields and livestock calling them and started to drift away, and Augustus, sensing that the first show was over, stopped what he was doing and walked over to his pickup truck to

have a smoke.

"That was pretty cool, Auggie," I said, secretly hoping that he would recall that it was I who had been most sensitive to his performance.

Cousin Augustus just nudged the toe of his Chinese cotton shoe into the gravel and spat a fleck of tobacco into the air. He finally looked up and across the neighboring fields in a melancholy fashion, as if he were a man burdened with insight among the vulgar.

My father took off his glasses and wiped them with his handkerchief. "Just what're you trying to do, Auggie?" he said.

I don't think anyone in town really knew what Cousin Augustus was trying to do. I thought he was just trying to look as if he were hitting an invisible ball into the air, but it was more complicated than that.

The next morning in front of Leiker's Five-and-Dime Augustus prowled the sidewalk in his black tights, looking for an audience. Despite their curiosity, no one wanted to get too close to him, thinking that he was having a spell and might lash out at even a familiar face, like a rabid dog will do. So they just passed by on the opposite side of the street, looking secretly at him sideways or over their shoulders.

Once or twice Augustus dashed across the street and went up immediately behind a cowering and fast-walking townsperson, mimicking his or her every move with silent and terrible grace. But that person would soon flee or just lie down on the side-

**"HE'S SMACKING  
DWARFS IN THE  
FOREHEAD!"**

walk and feign death, and Augustus would eventually wander back over to the Five-and-Dime.

Bob and Thelma Leiker, who owned the store, were of course incensed, and they periodically rushed out, wielding whiffle-ball bats or Ping-Pong paddles or tiny plastic swords in attempts to drive the enormous mime from their sidewalk.

"Cretins! Fools!" Augustus shouted, fending off their charges with roundhouse swings of his white-gloved fists.

But about noon, frustrated

with the light crowd and the incessant attacks of the Leikers, Augustus stalked into the Piggly Wiggly and came out again with a six-pack of beer and drank it all, I suppose, as he drove home to dinner.

But that evening Cousin Augustus was back on Main Street, right in front of the Dream Theatre, setting up a rickety easel that looked like it had been standing in some corner of his cowed for the last decade, and placing on it a stack of crudely lettered cards. He pranced around a bit, pulling the invisible rope and such, trying to attract attention to himself and raise an audience.

I noticed that he had a little barbecue sauce on his cheek—it was sort of purple on the white greasepaint and beneath the neon lights of the Dream marquee—and some mashed potatoes on the front of his leotard, and I all of a sudden felt a little bit sad, imagining him sitting in black at the supper table with Cousin Lafay and the kids, not saying anything but just eating and eyeing the plate of ribs like he had something against them. And then pushing himself from the table and heading back into town over the darkening white-rock roads to pursue his dream. It just made me sad, that's all.

But Augustus seemed to be enjoying himself. Folks who were out for evening strolls or were downtown to take advantage of Duckwall's extended summer hours began to drift over and have a look.

Augustus smiled with satisfaction and pointed to the easel and the front card, on which he had printed THE BOX.

"The box," everyone read in unison.

Augustus nodded and then thrust his hands out, his palms forward and stiff, and began to move them rapidly and flatly all about him.

"What's he doing?" someone asked.

"He's smacking something," Roy Graf said. "He's smacking . . . he's smacking little people. . . HE'S SMACKING DWARFS IN THE FOREHEAD!"

Before we could all cheer in triumph, Augustus stomped over and grabbed Roy Graf by the scruff of the neck and dragged him over and thrust his startled face into the cards on the easel, knocking it off balance and to the sidewalk and spilling them all.

"Can you read?" he shouted. "What's that say?"

Of course there was nothing to read anymore, just air, and Roy was so frightened and confused that he just began weeping pitifully and so



Augustus flung him to the ground.

"You all make me sick," he said to the rest of us, and then he curled his lip with such disdain that the blotch of barbecue sauce on his cheek stretched about an inch.

After that evening the community began to respect Augustus. They knew that artists were temperamental and difficult, given to fits of creative passion and violence beyond the ken of regular folks like themselves. And so they began frequenting his performances on Main Street and in front of the co-op and out by the rodeo grounds, standing about stiffly and politely and pretending to understand Augustus's often cryptic routines, routines with titles like CORNFLOWER EMOTION or NIHILISTIC RAILROAD TIE.

It wasn't too far a jump from that point to where Cousin Augustus decided that the community needed to pay him in exchange for the pleasure and enlightenment his artistic expression provided.

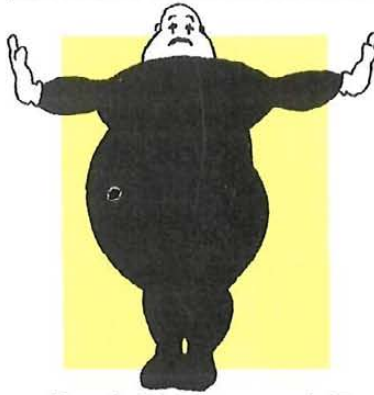
"I got this here black bowler for folks to put money in while I perform," he announced to my family one evening while we sat in our living room trying to watch *Guns*. He paced back and forth in front of our television, tugging at the seat of his black leotard with one hand and twirling the old felt hat in the other. My father was giggling about something Festus had said to Miss Kitty and so I didn't even think he had heard Augustus, but then he turned to him and said, "Well, hell, you mean now we got to *pay* to see you jump around in those black tights?"

I wasn't sure if the greasepaint was dissolving under tears or sweat or what; all I knew was that Cousin Augustus was hurt and that he was about to do violence to one of us. He probably would have, too, but as he came after us he stubbed the toe of his Chinese cotton shoe on the leg of the coffee table and had to limp to a stop. We could hear him weeping and cursing inside the house for a half-hour until we decided to go to the Dairy Queen for a treat. When we got back he was gone.

The next morning Augustus was on Main Street right in front of Coast-to-Coast Hardware. He was pretending that he was walking against a strong wind. Personally, I wasn't too impressed by this routine because, as normal, the wind was actually blowing about a hundred miles an hour already and it was all folks could do just to stand up straight themselves. But they all seemed to like it because it was so simple, and

so when Augustus finished they applauded, politely and sparsely because only a few could afford to take their hands from the bills of their caps. Cousin Augustus bowed and bel-lowed, "Thank you!" like he'd just finished playing an encore at Madison Square Garden, and then he went to point to his bowler so that everyone would know to leave money in it, but it was long gone. We could see it about a hundred yards down the road, skittering and bouncing along with the wind like a black jackrabbit.

Cousin Augustus stormed and raged for about five minutes and then he started walking right up to folks and saying, "Give me some money now." Naturally everyone was taken aback by this. They had all assumed that anything—even art—that took place outdoors was free for the watch-



ing, like a fistfight or a car wreck. To be asked to pay for something that they couldn't help but see even if they were minding their own business on the other side of the street was preposterous.

It was pretty soon after that that Augustus began performing with a shotgun by his side. At first folks wouldn't notice it, and they'd inevitably wander over to have a look at the big man prancing about in black tights, pretending to lick an ice-cream cone or lean against an invisible wall or, sometimes, just whirling about and clutching at air. But when they'd had enough and wanted to be on their way, Augustus would go for the gun and level it at them and say something like "Where you think you're going, Leon? Why don't you just move back here and enjoy the show." And Leon or whoever it happened to be would smile in a tight and fixed sort of way and shuffle back, scarcely moving any arms or legs at all.

Well, this went on for a few weeks and Augustus was able to make some pretty good money; but gradually folks learned to stay away from Main Street during the daylight hours. Oh, occasionally he'd spy a stray

who'd wandered downtown to pick up a toilet plunger or get a haircut, and he'd point his shotgun at him and order him over to watch. That was how he caught Merv Brungardt.

"Get your butt over here, Brungardt!" he shouted one bright and quiet afternoon, and he laid his shotgun against his shoulder and fixed him in his sights. "Get over here *now!*"

When Merv was before him he leaned the gun against the window of the Piggly Wiggly and then stood up and froze in the attitude of shaking hands.

"See here, I'm a mannequin," he explained to Merv. "Now you try to make me laugh or something."

Merv started to back slowly away.

"Don't you move, Brungardt," Augustus said. But Merv sort of turned his body and walked a few steps farther. Augustus broke his pose and picked up his shotgun and followed him and then set it down and froze once more. "Don't you walk again," he said.

But Merv kept moving away and Augustus kept having to break his pose and follow him a little bit with the shotgun and then put it down and resume his stance, and this kept up for about two blocks, Merv getting a little faster and going a little farther each time and Augustus hissing at him, "Don't! Don't you run! Don't you run from me!" as they went.

Pretty soon Merv threw caution to the wind and took off in a breakneck sprint and Augustus grabbed his gun and unloaded two shells at his fleeing back.

We had a beautiful day for Merv Brungardt's funeral. The sky was so blue it looked more like what some painter might imagine a sky should be rather than what it ever actually could be in reality, sort of that depthless blue that makes you feel that even if you died without having done anything very special in your life it was still okay, because you were around when the sky sprawled before you like so and the wind eased over your body carrying the smells of the earth and trees. . . . I don't know. It was the sort of day that made me feel funny inside, like I was about to see a naked girl and God didn't mind at all, was even rooting for me.

But of course I wasn't about to see a naked girl; we were in the cemetery to bury Merv Brungardt. Pastor Shuster was leading us in a hymn and I was trying not to look at Mrs. Brungardt and the children because I was afraid I might either start bawling myself or laughing, depending on

which way the catch in my throat flipped. And then I noticed something to my left, something moving up on a knoll about twenty-five yards from where we stood.

I turned to look and about that time so did everyone else and I couldn't believe my eyes; I couldn't believe the audacity of Cousin Augustus. He was prancing about in his black leotard and greasepaint, hopping to and fro and then throwing up his arms and opening his mouth in silent terror. On the easel set up behind him was a card that said *THE MURDER*. He concluded by lying down and assuming the stiff pose of the dead and then, in a flurry of panicked gestures, awakening and finding himself entombed, pressing his hands flatly and violently against the sides and lid of an invisible casket.

## GAS, FOOD, BEER— SEE THE WORLD'S BIGGEST LIVE MIME

While Augustus was getting to his feet and slapping the dust off his tights and getting ready to take a bow, I heard someone growl, "Let's get that cocksucker," and I was a little startled to see that it was my aunt Mathilda, Augustus's mother. "Let's go!" Pastor Shuster roared. "Let's get him!" And then we all charged the knoll, waving our Bibles and tear-soaked hankies like battle arms.

Cousin Augustus took his shotgun and fired over the top of us as a kind of warning. Some of the spray, though, caught Twila Geist, our high-school girls'-basketball star, right in the forehead, and she crumpled like a lanky sack of potatoes.

"Stay back!" Cousin Augustus bellowed, and we all came to a stop and stood there puffing and trembling in our impotence. "Now watch this!" he said, and he laid his gun down and proceeded to enact a skit that involved going into some sort of candy store and not having enough money to buy anything and then finding a coin on the ground and ultimately making his purchase.

We all enjoyed the routine in spite of ourselves, and a few even burst into vigorous applause at its conclusion. Most of us, though, stood around and tried to look mad and impatient, but I think we all secretly hoped Augustus would do another bit. We even forgot about Merv Brungardt

lying in his open casket at graveside, and only upon Pastor Shuster's desperate moan did we turn back to it. At first I thought that a small child in a dark cape was clambering about the head of the casket. Only after a minute did it occur to me that the child was really an enormous black crow pacing back and forth across Merv's bloodless face.

"Shoo! Get away!" Mrs. Brungardt screamed, and she ran toward the casket slowly but wildly, waving her flaccid and heavy arms, pumping her stout legs beneath her dark cotton dress. I overtook her just as her heel stuck in the soft turf and she lurched forward, rolling end over end with sudden and terrible velocity before coming to a stop on her stomach, the hem of her dress and slip pulled up and over her trembling and white-pantied buttocks.

"Get away!" I yelled at the crow, and as I reached the casket he flew heavily and with a great beating of air into the blue sky. On Merv's face he had left giant muddy tracks and on his white collar a matted black feather that lifted and stirred gently on the warm breeze. When I turned back to the knoll everyone was watching Cousin Augustus again, who was now pretending to play badminton with a ferocious and unbeatable opponent.

If Augustus hadn't robbed all the folks at the funeral that day—turning his shotgun on them and gathering up their purses and wallets at the end of his performance—and if he hadn't spent the hour before that moving in and out of increasingly unfathomable routines, I think the community would have welcomed him back into the fold. As it was, they had to restore harmony and order and so they hired Zachariah Grub, the president of the Farmers State Bank, to organize a band of steely-eyed farmhands and capture the mountain of a man in black tights.

And so one Saturday morning they thundered into town on ATV three-wheelers and lassoed Augustus on the sidewalk in front of Leiker's Five-and-Dime. I remember them dragging him over the bricks and up the street, and Augustus fighting the ropes with wild black-eyed fury even as the shopkeepers and townfolk went about their business and pretended not to see the commotion.

They ended up putting Cousin Augustus in a cage in front of the Texaco station out by the Interstate. There was a sign by the side of the road about five miles from town that prepared travelers, announcing in big

red letters *GAS, FOOD, BEER—SEE THE WORLD'S BIGGEST LIVE MIME—DREILING'S TEXACO—EXIT 277 AHEAD*.

Every day I would ride my bicycle to the station and sit in the shade and sip a bottle of Fresca while Augustus paced back and forth, moving from one silent routine to another, his black leotard gray with sweat and dirt and hanging in threads over his back, this from his having been dragged halfway around the county on the morning of his capture. He was missing one of his Chinese cotton shoes, too. I looked for it for three days without luck. I figured some dog or coyote made off with it.

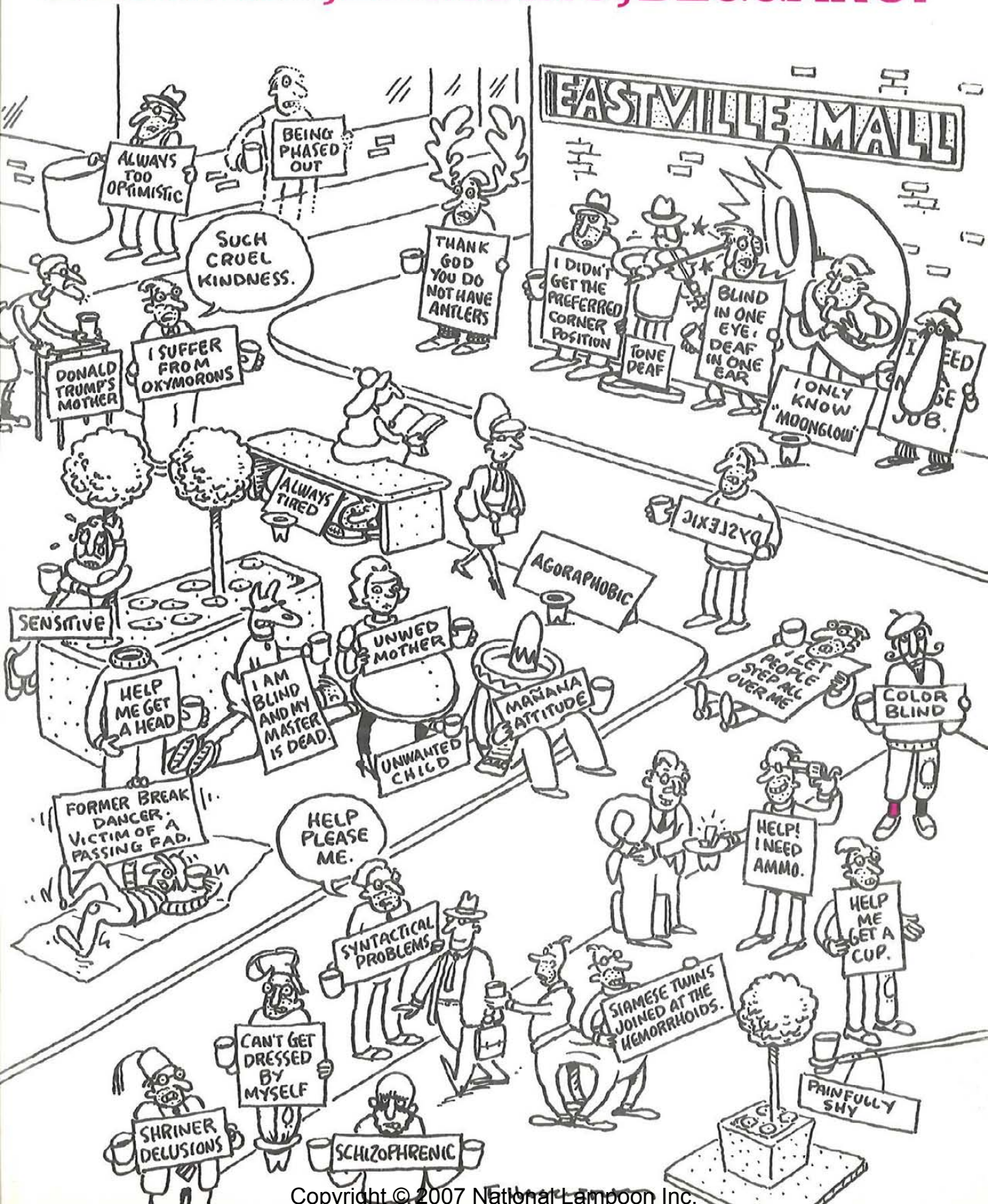
Tourists would come through and stand and stare at Augustus while he performed. They'd take pictures and stroll around the cage to get better looks and usually end up tossing their loose change in between the bars. If they didn't give any money and just turned and walked away, then Augustus would begin storming and cursing and, if he thought of it in time, scoop up a handful of gravel and hurl it at their startled heads.

But I think Cousin Augustus liked his life as a mime. It was his calling, after all. Occasionally I'd catch him staring sort of aimlessly at the wheat fields across the highway, but I don't suppose he ever really had the inclination to go back, not that he could have anyway: Zachariah Grub had put a padlock as big as a rodeo saddle on the door of the cage, and every night he came and yanked and shook it to convince himself it was fast.

No, Augustus stayed right there and played for the tourists for seven years; he performed up until the day—the second, actually—that he died, and even a little longer, I suppose, because everyone just thought his death throes were an unconvincing part of his routine and they left him there, hot and dead in his leotard and Chinese cotton shoe beneath the striped shadows of his cage. ■



# BEGGARS, BEGGARS, BEGGARS!



# The End of the

## Jesus this sunblock stinks like

piss mixed with Lemon Pledge what like I'm gonna get a melanoma from five hours in the sun? The old lady smears it on till she looks like the duck in that pollution ad, fuck it, it's my day off, I'm not using it, she can sue me, take the money, go on vacation, this one's 340 yards, little uphill, what a wimp hole, to these hackers it's the sixteenth at Augusta these people can't crack 110 and they're slower than Hume Cronyn on a drum set, well God bless 'em it's better than playing with the old lady, at least they don't make totem pole faces when I give them advice, if she goes down in the basement she'll shit a Buick but fuck all if I'm gonna spend my Sunday mopping, the worst part is that it was in the suds cycle so everything's slippery, she's gonna go apeshit

## Jesus this course is so lame it

looks like a Shredded Wheat farm like some industrial park but it was a toxic dump so they put a golf course on it, at Windy Willows Johnny Boyle was shitfaced all day but man did he have that course in prime condition, Lou said Johnny looked like he was pregnant with Baby Shamu the beer ball but I shouldn't laugh, I wish I had his job, after I caddied the Tri-State Barney said I could come up any Monday but I didn't, never had the time just doesn't go hand in hand with a wedding ring, she put my game in the shitter, ruined the honeymoon, I had her in my face thirty-six holes a day my God I can't believe those cheap assholes are still looking for their ball in the weeds let's hit into 'em, give 'em a little incentive to move on, I guess this is the price you pay for having a real job—playing golf on Sunday with the rest of the world, but if the old man-in-law can come through just once and I could get that gig selling at Route 46 Chevy I could jack the income, make my own hours, sneak off and play weekdays, he says it won't be for at least a couple months I wonder if that means he's talking out of his ass Jesus we'll need the money, Eddie's brother says with a couple hatchers you could stand on the porch with a Bic butane and you couldn't burn money faster than it disappears

## look at this swing this guy

looks like a Harvard asshole with his glasses and his Bermuda shorts what a joke designed and engineered to hit the ball lamely, hey, how about that he hacked his drive, sure whine about it, with that swing you need a fucking body transplant, what's that cart doing coming toward us oh my God it's the Starter driving the old lady out, she found the basement oh shit oh thank God it's not her thank God oh God what if she comes out and says she can't mop 'cause she's pregnant all right time to hit, I'm dying to rip into the ball, oh man I can taste how beautifully I'm gonna hit this you'll never see a ball hit like I'm gonna hit it, on the first I hacked my drive and they were screaming like I was Paul Bunyan, okay you pulled the last two drives, keep your mind clear, smooth, don't think about it, you don't play enough to get fancy, start the swing high, inside out, bring it back in left, smooth...

## no stop thinking just hit you're

thinking too much, step away and start again, no fuck it,

don't be compulsive just hit it, Lou's right, golf's a phallic game—drive is first shot, covers most distance, that's like your appearance, charm, job, but you can rally from anywhere and hit a great shot, that's like your rap to the chick, putting is actual nitty-gritty seduction, can make up for or render useless all other aspects of your game—be thinking about how you're going to finish, finish with the club extending out toward the hole, Bob Farragut was always going on about that, man did he have a hot car a mint condition '59 Corvette, Farragut could do that shit with the club head 'cause he was so strong his wrists were like my biceps, huge hands, Lou said if a chick has big hands she inherited them from her father and he had a hippo-dipper and her brothers did too so a chick with big hands means she has big expectations, oh fuck I set up to draw the ball and with this swing I'm gonna slice it I'm gonna be out of bounds right, I'll be hitting three, if I bogey, I always bogey this hole that's seven, ten over, if I par in (I'd need to go to Lourdes first) that's 82, bogey in 94, I haven't shot that since tenth grade, at least I'm not playing Eddie for money, he always scrapes me for the dollar birdies, fifteen dollars to play here it's a miracle the old lady lets me out here, you can't use coupons, Jesus this ball's gonna go right and I'm playing it back too far in my stance too

## oh fuck I hit it off the heel

it's going left oh man I'm lucky it's slicing back to the fairway, good position with the pin in the right corner I must live right I can't believe I hacked the shot and these hackers are saying good shot when I hit it 190 I wish I'd fucking crushed one man they would have creamed, I remember the time Joanie came up here on a Monday we were about to tee off and she was standing at the shag tee watching, I was going to crush one just for her and I totally hacked it and she goes "Nice shot" then Mikey Renfro got up, that hacker, and crushed one and she was practically drooling on him, how come girls liked him he had no touch around the green, if only women knew he had a stone touch they'd have realized what a butchery lay he must have been but then that guy Joey couldn't chip for shit but he had a great touch on the pinball machine, I can't believe I hacked the shot and the worst part was I always outdrove Mikey, always, by twenty yards, I used to look at that Paul guy and try to see why chicks always said he was a good lay was it his stomach muscles

## I can't believe I hacked my

drive and the Japanese guy crushed his and I outdrove him by thirty yards now I gotta stand here while he does these stance adjustments from a Jack Nicklaus video, I hear he's a god in the Orient, Dr. Joyce Brothers says that whole thing about the size of the hands is a myth, 145 yards, little wind helping, ground's dry, 8-iron, those Koreans in the salad bar charged me \$6.90 for a six of Bud, \$1.15 each, like they had a beer in a bar once at the airport and that became their pricing template, I better put on some sunblock I'll be a lobster and the old lady'll shit, you know what I'd love, what would liberate my fucking spirit would be to take a spin over to Windy Willows and find Joanie still in the pro shop bloated up like a big load walrus in stretch slacks or

# Parirway

by Dave Hanson

find out she's waitressing at Friendly's and has three kids who puke from nerves all the time, now follow through, you've got plenty of club so swing smooth, and find out she doesn't even remember me, so I never missed any real chance like that she actually craved me, I bet she looks great and her old man died and left her a fortune, the only thing ruined it for her is she never had me to share it with

## oh my God! What a shot what

a fucking shot what a fucking beautiful beautiful fucking fucking shot I hit oh my God it's shimmering fighting the air like a falcon in flight soaring soaring soaring and now from its pinnacle exhausted, plummeting with soft feet to its target, cream cream cream oh my God the air evacuates my body I am beholden to the beauty of its parabola, oh it's art, the course a canvas, the club a brush, the ball the paint, and the swing the brushstroke carves out a moment which like all history is immortal by dint of its mere occurrence but which is not just immortal but memorable for its transcendent beauty, oh soar soar soar ride the wind ball, oh glorious—oh FUCK it went in the trap I can't believe it I hit an 8-iron I guess there's a lot of wind up there damn it I was playing a Rock-Flite left over from last year 'cause Eddie mooched all my Titlelists the cocksucker Jesus I can't play out of the sand for shit I only play once a month it went in the trap and I can't believe these assholes are saying nice shot, yeah right, thank you, nod head, fuck you, why do I play this game, all it does is remind me of how I've gone downhill, I used to break 80 like falling off a log now I'm lucky I break 90, it's like having a chick tell you you're not the man you used to be but hell I guess having graceless aging stuck in your face is better than kids dumping Carvel and Kool-Aid on me and the old lady shrieking about we need a new carpet, is that her, oh my nerves, hit the sand shot and putt out and then only twelve holes and back to the warden the American Dream it's like enjoying a nice ride on a nice day but the odometer ticking off reminds you a houseful of in-laws are at the end of the rainbow like your birthday reminds you you're one day closer to being coffin-meat

## maybe I should hack, play

really bad, it'll take longer, I love it out here but I guess if I hacked I wouldn't enjoy it so much, I should have tried to turn pro, club pro even assistant, make a decent living, Florida in the winter, resort pussy year-round, so what if most of the pros over forty have road map noses, at least they have a good heyday, they have a heyday period, the taste of that 8-iron is in my mouth and stomach rancid with the bitter taste of shortcoming, I'm gonna fuck this sand shot up and be lucky to make 6, look at this lie it's all dirt and rocks, you know why I play so bad out of the traps? 'cause I think about it too much, I should just go in there, it's all a brain job, just hit the ball, okay, here goes, slasher, brainless beauty

## I skulled it oh man I got away

with a bad shot caught in the long grass it ain't a tap-in but it's better than I deserve, fifteen-footer, my looks were just enough to get by, my rap was good but turned out to be mis-directed and not fruitful and my emergency last-ditch sal-

vage job was clumsy but by luck found the right audience, it was like I was lame but she was drunk and lonely enough to talk to me, now I'm up in her apartment, a one-putt's like if I fuck her good enough so she'll beg me to come over anytime and use her, she turns into a scalding pliant willing wench just at the thought of my touch, a two-putt's like I put the moves on her and fuck her or something but it's not that great, a three-putt's like she tells me I better leave, she's got a boyfriend and doesn't feel right doing this or she's gotta get to work early tomorrow and I gotta go home and beat off and the weird thing is the three-putt and the one-putt are so close because if you go for the one-putt and miss it you can knock it too far past to recover for the two-putt like if you really tell her what you hunger for what you crave way down in the need of your marrow she could either go crazy for you or tell you to piss off, and now the fear comes, when you get so afraid of missing the two-putt you won't go for the one-putt 'cause you know the one-putt is a sweet mother par, but the three-putt is the double bogey and double bogeys are beating off and bogeys are getting laid but nothing special and pars are like hot fucking like in *The Godfather* when he crams her against the door and of course birdies are like when you're fucking Christie Brinkley and she passes out 'cause she's dehydrated from orgasming I wonder if being older and married has made my putting suck, that I don't have that hole-directed fire anymore, hmmm, maybe it's age I don't even pee horizontal anymore, okay this putt breaks left to right, not too much, little uphill so make sure you give it a good lick, okay son of a bitch do it

## oh fuck what the hell what the

fuck what the hell I can't believe oh mother of shit I left the goddamn putt seven feet short what the hell was I thinking about that's like Christie's telling you she's a nympho and you tell her you just wanna be friends oh God I'm the biggest asshole in the world I hate myself I'm not fit to live I don't deserve to be out here I should be fired from my job, I should be starving instead of those people in India I suck I hate myself come on get it together and make this putt it's not over yet oh fuck I gotta let these hackers putt look at this the guy lines up the putt like that creep who won the tournament on TV last week they always do this, they think if it works for some guy who's spent his whole life hitting golf balls fourteen hours a day if they use his stance they'll one-putt everything, he's lining it up all fucking day I'm gonna explode I gotta hit this putt or I'll go crazy oh Jesus he knocked it by and he's still away, I'm not gonna let him putt I'll pretend I think I'm away step up and hit it firm to the right inside half of the cup and it's gonna break just a little and I'll have a 5, I can recover, par the next three, out in 43, 40 on the back 83, not too bad for someone who plays once every three weeks, okay just hit it firm

## oh fuck oh fuck go go go go

oh fuck oh fuck oh FUCK I had it dead on line and I left it an inch short I should be shot I deserve to die I don't deserve to live I'm such a weak dick I should be killed oh fuck oh fuck oh my God is that the old lady with a mop oh no it's not thank God oh it's so great to be out here ■

## Edited by John Bendel



Jonathon Rcsen

## TRUE FACTS

AN AD CAMPAIGN TO promote AIDS awareness, launched by Bos and OMNI, two Montreal-based advertising agencies, featured billboards with an idiomatic French slogan apparently meant to say something like "AIDS. Think about it."

However, English translations installed in the Toronto



metro angered some AIDS activists. The billboards read: "AIDS. Stick it in your head instead!" *Toronto Star* (contributed by Jeremy Sale)

 T  F

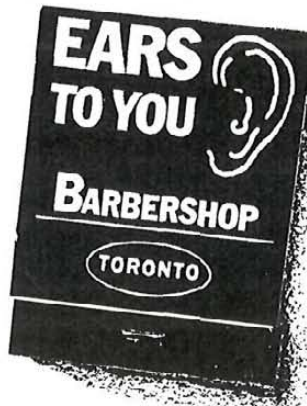
EVELYN E. KUYKENDALL of Marshville, North Carolina, was awarded \$210,000 by a federal judge for injuries suffered during a "City of Light" faith-healing ceremony. According to ministers Charles and Frances Hunter, who presided over the event at the Greenville Hyatt Regency, the sixty-

seven-year-old woman fractured her spine when she fell backward "in a peculiar way" during the service and their "catchers" were unable to do their job. *Beaufort Gazette* (contributed by John Smith)

 T  F

ACCORDING TO A LAWYER for German factory worker Peter Ditert, his client smashed into fourteen cars on a busy street in an unsuccessful attempt to kill himself. Ditert, the attorney said, was still suffering from the emotional shock of having been abandoned by his parents at the age of four.

Besides crashing into the cars, Ditert also tried to cause his own death by throwing himself in front of a car,



plunging a hair dryer into his bath, slashing his wrists, swallowing rat poison, filling his house with gas, shooting himself with a pistol, driving off an embankment, drinking a pint of brake fluid, and taking sixty sleeping pills. . . . And he's still not dead. (Merseyside) *Daily Mirror* (contributed by Paul Chorley)

 T  F

IN SARASOTA, FLORIDA, a metal clipboard left on the back bumper of an Emergency Medical Service ambulance fell off as the vehicle was crossing the railroad tracks, then ricocheted and struck a passing pedestrian, knocking the artificial eye

out of his head. The dazed man, who was treated for cuts and bruises at a local hospital, turned the clipboard over to the sheriff's office but was unable to recover his fake eye. *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* (contributed by Joe Jarret)

 T  F

AFTER THIRTY SIXTH-grade students from Jay Elementary School in Jay, Flor-



**True puzzler: Is it the place that's funny, or is it the matchbooks?**

ida, visited a local bank to learn about banking and currency, the bank manager called Principal Elton Nowling to report that the institution was short \$10,100. Teachers discovered that two of the pupils had stuffed hundred-dollar bills into their clothes while touring the vault. *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* (contributed by Tom Spartis)

 T  F

CONNECTICUT TRANSIT has a strict policy against discrimination: its affirmative-

action policy not only promises equal opportunity regardless of race, sex, and age for transit workers, including bus drivers, but also prohibits discrimination because of "blindness, criminal record, and mental disorder." (contributed by Robin LaBella)

 T  F

ACCORDING TO THE *Norwalk Reflector*, Larry K. Diewald's recent arrest for making obscene remarks to female patrons of Comet Cleaners and pinching several of them in the buttocks



was not the first time the forty-two-year-old motel resident behaved badly on the premises. Police had previously removed him from the coin-operated laundry when he was caught photographing female customers as they bent over. (contributed by Don Mossman)

 T  F

DURING AN ARGUMENT, Rosalie Searles of Unadilla, New York, accidentally fell out of the car her husband was driving. He hit the gas pedal by mistake, and the automobile ran over her right leg. While she was lying in the road, a local fireman responding to the call for an ambulance drove around the police cars that had gathered at the scene and ran over both her feet.

Searles was treated at a

local hospital for bruises and scrapes, while her husband and the fireman were charged with driving while intoxicated. *Ithaca Journal* (contributed by David F. Johnson)

T   F

A TWENTY-TWO-YEAR-old man in Thunder Bay, Ontario, was charged with failing to share the roadway and fined \$53.75 after his wheelchair collided with a pizza delivery car. *Vancouver Sun* (contributed by Gary Bills)

T   F

A KENTUCKY MAN HAS filed a malpractice suit against Nashville physician Dr. Claude H. Workman, seeking \$3.5 million in damages. The suit charges that treatment intended to



T   F  
 ACCORDING TO THE *News Journal* of Mansfield, Ohio, local police transferred a twenty-four-year-old New Jersey man, jailed for criminal trespass, from the jail cell to Mansfield General Hospital after officers "observed the man with his socks tied around his head and his head in the toilet."

The man told the cops he was a Navy SEAL. (contributed by Tim Snider)

T   F

CHRIS MASTER, OWNER of County Outhouses, returned to pick up the portable toilets he had provided for the sixty-fifth annual Columbia County Volunteer Firemen's



Association parade in upstate New York. After loading the Port-o-lets on his trailer, Master drove home, parking the trailer in a nearby yard. Soon, however, Master and his wife heard shouts for help coming from the loaded trailer.

According to the *Chatham Courier*, Master "found one bedraggled, a bit tipsy, young woman trying to fight her way out of the blue box that had held her captive." (contributed by John McGowan)

T   F

FLORIDA GOVERNOR Bob Martinez ordered tests of the state's sixty-six-year-old electric chair after four defense attorneys claimed the

device was broken. During the spring 1990 execution of Jesse Tafero, according to *New York's Newsday*, "officials said a synthetic sponge under the headpiece caused flames and smoke to shoot out from the electrodes attached to the inmate's head. Previously, a natural sea sponge had been used successfully in executions."

An electrical engineer tested the chair "using a vegetable colander, plumbing pipe, and a sponge, and pronounced it in perfect working order." (contributed by Scott Limbach)

T   F

JAIL ESCAPEE MARVIN Eugene Pearson attempted to



remove a tattoo from his arm with a blowtorch. Special FBI Agent Marty Weber said authorities noticed the wound on Pearson's arm when he was rearrested in Arkansas.

"I suppose he may have had some notion in his mind that it was a particularly identifying tattoo," said Weber. *Unattributed* (contributed by Bill Swan)

T   F

FROM THE *DETROIT News*: "A burglar really cleaned up when he cleaned out the Gastonia, North Carolina, apartment of Stephanie Pitts.

"Pitts said her stereo and a long list of other things were stolen but the apartment was left spotless.

"The burglar washed the dirty dishes, mopped the kitchen floor, and scrubbed the bathroom tub after taking a shower. He even rearranged her furniture.

"I was kind of glad the house was cleaned up," Pitts said, "but where's my stuff?" (contributed by Forrest E. Cunningham)

T   F

LOOKING FOR A LOVE seat stolen from the lobby of a South Charleston, West Virginia, Ramada Inn, police stopped a car on U.S. 119 when they spotted the stolen couch hanging out of the trunk.

The driver of the car, Glen Adkins, said he didn't know how the nine-hundred-dollar love seat had got into his trunk.

"I almost do, but I'm not sure,"



he said. "That's what I have to investigate." *Williamson Daily News* (contributed by Melissa Ferris)

T   F

AN ONTARIO MAN, TIM Moss, demanded a \$10,000 settlement from All Canada Collect, a collection agency, after the agency allegedly ridiculed Moss's stuttering. An All Canada spokesman admitted that a "very, very bad joke," entered in a computer after an employee's conversation with Moss,

# FILL'ER UP!

somehow got out of the computer system and into the mail.

According to the *London (Ontario) Free Press*, Moss received a notice from All Canada that read: "WHAAT ISSS YOURR PPRR-OBBBLEM. PAY THIS F---N ACC-COUNNTT. THANK YOU. MR. PARKER." (contributed by Julian Belanger)

✔ T □ F

WE MAY BE WITNESSING A NEW trend in concealed .25-caliber weaponry.

In Texas, the *El Paso Times* published this police press release: "At 2:45 A.M. a transvestite in full battle gear, Marvin 'Jovana' Rodriguez, twenty-seven, from Juarez, was arrested at 100 W. San Antonio [on a charge of] burglary of auto. Rodriguez was taken to the Central station, where officers noticed him squirming around incessantly. Police investigated why Rodriguez could not sit still and found a .25-caliber pistol in his rectum."

And the *Nashville (Tennessee) Banner* reported that twenty-three-year-old Kenneth Mason had been in custody for twenty-four hours "on several charges" when his wife called to warn police that Mason had a gun, probably hidden in the cheeks of his buttocks.

"We went down and pulled him out like he was going to court," said jail administrator John Burns. "We started searching him, jerked his little britches down, and there it was." (items contributed by Roger Maier and Mike Long)

✔ T □ F

RESTAURANT MANAGER RICHARD L. Vollrath, Jr., an admitted arsonist, set fire to a sixty-five-foot fiberglass gorilla at the entrance to the Wild Water Rapids Water Park in Virginia Beach.

"I've gone past it a thousand times on my way to and from work," said Vollrath later. "I like looking up and seeing it, and I feel very bad that it's not there anymore. I'm sorry I did it—very sorry." *Washington Post* (contributed by Mr. & Mrs. Fred Lange)

✔ T □ F

IN CINCINNATI, OHIO, BONITA KNECHT pleaded guilty to a lesser plea after she was charged with child endangerment. Knecht told police she thought her young son was in the back of her van taking a nap when she left the family's farm in Brookville, Indiana. But the four-year-old had climbed to the top of the van, where he clung to the luggage rack as his mother drove more than eleven miles along Interstate 74. *Columbus Republic* (contributed by Scott Keen)

✔ T □ F

DURING THE DEBATE ON A NEW ANTI-abortion bill in the Louisiana capital of Baton Rouge, legislator Carl Gunter, Democrat of Pineville, maintained that incest was not a valid reason to terminate a pregnancy. "When I got to thinking, the way we get thoroughbred horses and thoroughbred dogs is through inbreeding," he said. "Maybe we would get a super-sharp kid." *Daily Reveille* (contributed by Ajaye Bloomstone)

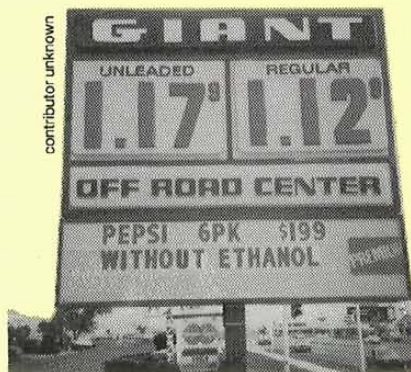


Corey Mojereson

Niles Chandler



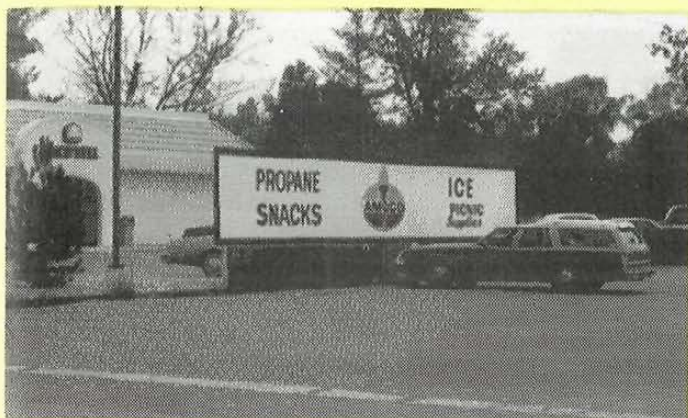
contributor unknown



R. Damigella







Kurt Edwards

T  F

JOSEPH T. HILL, SIXTY-ONE, OF LONGWOOD, Florida, was convicted of printing three million zlotys in phony Polish currency. Rick Johnson, head of the U.S. Secret Service office in Orlando, told the *Orlando Sentinel* his agency had no record of any other Americans printing Polish currency. A spokeswoman for the Polish embassy in Washington said that 9,500 zlotys are worth one dollar.

"The guy could have printed a boxcar full of them and not have enough to buy an expensive suit," said Johnson. (contributed by Steve Zarantonello)

T  F

FROM THE TELEGRAPH HERALD OF Dubuque, Iowa:

"John Reilly, twenty-six, of Urbana, Illinois, was not injured when his car was struck by a train at 4:35 A.M. Sunday. Police said Reilly was eastbound on Hawthorne Street from Rhomberg Avenue when a northbound Sooline freight train hit his vehicle. Reilly told officers the train swerved to hit him, according to the report." (contributed by Tom Ashenbrenner)

T  F

PHILLIP R. BEL PASSO OF FAIR LAWN, NEW Jersey, allegedly helped himself to a new camcorder at a shop in nearby Midland Park, then wrapped his head in a garbage bag to make his escape.

"I can't remember the last time I saw a guy with a bag wrapped around his head," said police chief Thomas Monarque of Midland Park, who was patrolling with another officer at the time. "It wasn't raining. It looked a little bit out of place. Once we turned the car around, he bolted."

When the cops caught up to him, Bel Passo raised his hands and said, "Don't shoot me, I have a flute!"

According to the *Bergen County Record*, Bel Passo did have a metal flute in his pocket. (contributed by Kieran Barrett)

T  F

ATTENTION, CONTRIBUTORS! WE SEND each contributor the sensational "True Facts" T-shirt for every submission used, as well as a credit. For every photo used, we send each contributor a T-shirt plus ten dollars in genuine American currency—and, of course, a credit. Make sure to include the shirt size you want (S-M-L-XL) with every group of True Facts or True Facts photos sent us. Send your contributions to



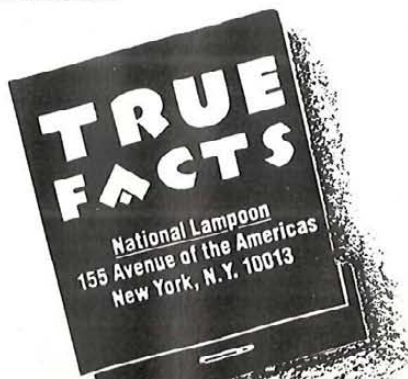
Dave Sever



Glenn Fromes



Eric Romero



# COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

## ★ ★ FROM NATIONAL LAMPOON ★ ★

### MAGAZINES \$5.00 EACH

- AUGUST 1972 / Democracy
- SEPTEMBER 1972 / Boredom
- NOVEMBER 1972 / Decadence
- DECEMBER 1972 / Easter Issue
- MAY 1973 / Fraud
- JUNE 1973 / Violence
- JULY 1973 / Modern Times
- SEPTEMBER 1973 / Life Parody
- OCTOBER 1973 / Banana Issue
- NOVEMBER 1973 / Sports
- DECEMBER 1973 / Self-indulgence
- MAY 1974 / Fiftieth Anniversary
- JULY 1974 / Dessert
- AUGUST 1974 / Isolationism & Tooth Care
- SEPTEMBER 1974 / Old Age
- NOVEMBER 1974 / Civics
- OCTOBER 1975 / Collector's Issue
- JANUARY 1976 / Secret Issue
- FEBRUARY 1976 / Artists and Models
- MARCH 1976 / In Like a Lion
- APRIL 1976 / Olympic Sports
- MAY 1976 / Unwanted Foreigners
- AUGUST 1976 / Summer Sex
- SEPTEMBER 1976 / The Latest Issue
- OCTOBER 1976 / The Funny Pages
- NOVEMBER 1976 / Is Democracy Fixed?
- DECEMBER 1976 / Selling Out
- JANUARY 1977 / Surefire Issue
- FEBRUARY 1977 / JFK Reinaugural
- MARCH 1977 / Science and Technology
- APRIL 1977 / Ripping the Lid off TV
- JUNE 1977 / Careers
- JULY 1977 / Nasty Sex
- AUGUST 1977 / Cheap Thrills
- SEPTEMBER 1977 / Grow Up!
- OCTOBER 1977 / All Beales
- NOVEMBER 1977 / Lifestyles
- DECEMBER 1977 / Christmas in December
- JANUARY 1978 / The Role of Sex in History
- FEBRUARY 1978 / Spring Fascism in Preview
- MARCH 1978 / Crime and Punishment
- APRIL 1978 / Spring Cleaning
- MAY 1978 / Families
- JUNE 1978 / The Wild West
- JULY 1978 / 100th Anniversary
- AUGUST 1978 / Today's Teens
- SEPTEMBER 1978 / Style
- OCTOBER 1978 / Entertainment

### \$4.00 EACH

- APRIL 1979 / April Fool
- MAY 1979 / International Terrorism
- AUGUST 1979 / Summer Vacation
- OCTOBER 1979 / Comedy
- DECEMBER 1979 / Success
- FEBRUARY 1980 / Tenth Anniversary
- MARCH 1980 / March Miscellany
- APRIL 1980 / Vengeance
- MAY 1980 / Sex Roles
- JUNE 1980 / Fresh Air
- JULY 1980 / Slime, Swill, and Politics
- AUGUST 1980 / Anxiety
- SEPTEMBER 1980 / The Past
- OCTOBER 1980 / Aggression
- NOVEMBER 1980 / Potpourri
- DECEMBER 1980 / Fun Takes a Holiday
- FEBRUARY 1981 / Sin

- MARCH 1981 / Women and Dogs
- APRIL 1981 / Chaos
- MAY 1981 / Naked Ambition
- JUNE 1981 / Romance
- JULY 1981 / Endless, Mindless Summer Sex
- AUGUST 1981 / Let's Get It Up, America!
- SEPTEMBER 1981 / Back to School
- OCTOBER 1981 / Movies
- NOVEMBER 1981 / TV and Why It Sucks
- DECEMBER 1981 / What's Hip?
- JANUARY 1982 / Sword and Sorcery
- FEBRUARY 1982 / The Sexy Issue
- MARCH 1982 / Food Fight
- APRIL 1982 / Failure
- MAY 1982 / Crime
- JUNE 1982 / Do It Yourself
- JULY 1982 / Sporting Life
- AUGUST 1982 / The New West
- SEPTEMBER 1982 / Hot Sex!
- OCTOBER 1982 / O.C. and Stiggs
- NOVEMBER 1982 / Economic Recovery
- DECEMBER 1982 / E.T. Issue
- JANUARY 1983 / The Top Stories of 1983
- FEBRUARY 1983 / Ragging Controversy
- MARCH 1983 / Tamper-Proof Issue
- APRIL 1983 / Swimsuit
- MAY 1983 / The South Seas
- JUNE 1983 / Adults Only
- JULY 1983 / Vacation!
- AUGUST 1983 / Science and Bad Manners
- SEPTEMBER 1983 / Big Anniversary Issue
- OCTOBER 1983 / Dilated Pupils
- NOVEMBER 1983 / No Score
- DECEMBER 1983 / Holiday Jeers

### \$3.00 EACH

- JANUARY 1984 / Time Parody Issue
- FEBRUARY 1984 / All-Comics Issue
- MARCH 1984 / The Sixties' Greatest Hits
- APRIL 1984 / You Can Parody Anything
- MAY 1984 / Baseball Preview
- JUNE 1984 / This Summer's Movies
- JULY 1984 / Special Summer Fun
- AUGUST 1984 / Unofficial Olympics Guide
- SEPTEMBER 1984 / Fall Fashions
- OCTOBER 1984 / Just Good Stuff
- NOVEMBER 1984 / The Accidental Issue
- DECEMBER 1984 / The Last of the old N!
- JANUARY 1985 / Good Clean Sex
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- AUGUST 1985 / All-New True Facts
- SEPTEMBER 1985 / Lust Issue
- OCTOBER 1985 / Music Issue
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by John Bendel



Jonathan Rosen

## TRUE FACTS REPORTER

**Your True Facts Reporter recently interviewed Tony, a homeowner in an older suburb where the width of a driveway separates the single-family houses from one another and little outdoor Madonna shrines abound. Tony recalled a particular neighbor who once lived next door.**

**I** WAS working the day the Mortons moved in, but the kids who watched said they owned this, like, swayback sofa and a huge-screen TV. They also said the Morton kids were a couple of turds.

Tony Junior was ten then and Danielle was only eight, so we tell them it isn't nice to say stuff like that about people. You know, the Morton kids are little kids just like you are, and blah, blah, blah. That kind of stuff. So Tony Junior and Danielle promise not to call them turds anymore, but their hearts aren't in it, if you know what I mean.

The first time little Howie Morton knocks on our door, I began to understand why. The kid's about eight and he's standing there when I open the door and I swear, he's sneering at me. I wanna use your bathroom, he says.

Hey, no big deal, even if he does live next door, he's just a kid, right? So I let him in. But he does the same thing the next day, and when he doesn't come downstairs after a while, I go up looking for him. There he is in the bathroom pouring prescriptions into the sink.

It's the new neighbors' kid, so I try to be nice. You shouldn't do that, I tell

him. You know what he says? He says, Sorry, I forgot I wasn't home. Then the little turd looks at me and asks if I got anything to eat.

The next time he knocks I tell him to go home and use his own bathroom. But he just stands there on the steps, whining. He says, But I like yo-o-o-urs!

We wouldn't let him in after that, but he and his sister, Brenda, keep knocking on our door anyway. She's, like, six years old and already ugly. She asks if Howie is here. He asks if Brenda is here, and both of them ask to use the bathroom. They also ask to borrow toys or have a snack or watch television. They're a real pain in the ass.

We decide to talk to their mother about it. That's when we meet Debbie Morton. She's a real cow, with stringy

that heavy stuff, she says. But hey, these days Al is a supervisor.

I guess supervisors don't do house repairs, because a month or so later, we get this storm and a gutter gets blown loose from the Mortons' house. It's hanging over our driveway, right over where I park the Regal. I talk to Al a dozen times, but it's still dangling the same way in July when he finally gets the urge to do some home improvement.

Does he fix the gutter? Oh no. Morton comes home with an above-ground swimming pool. He tells me it was "extra" down at the warehouse. It's for the kids, he says. Al Morton has this disgusting, pudgy face that always looks sunburned, even in the winter. What a shithead.

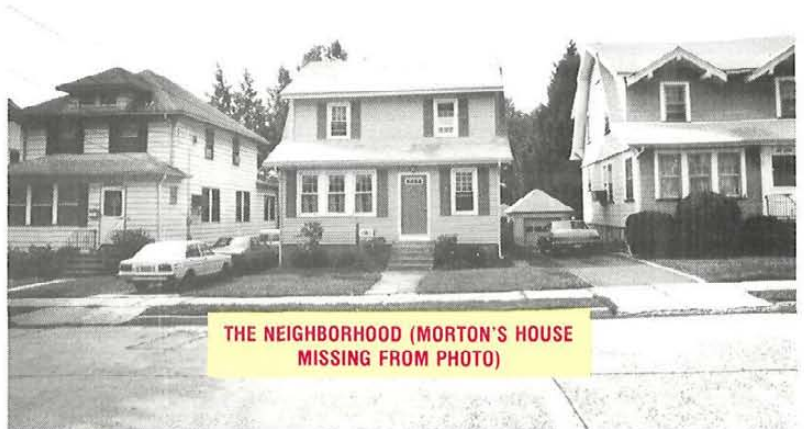
Being a shithead, Morton, of course, knows *nada* about construction, so he doesn't bother to grade the ground before setting up the pool. He just slaps it together one Saturday and fills it with water. I can hear the thing creak as the water's running in, then it begins to lean. Lucky for us, it's leaning toward the Bartulis' house on the other side.

Joe Bartuli's freaked, you know? But Morton reads him some technical stuff from the instructions about how strong the pool is and tells him not to worry. Bartuli believes him. They're both a couple of shitheads.

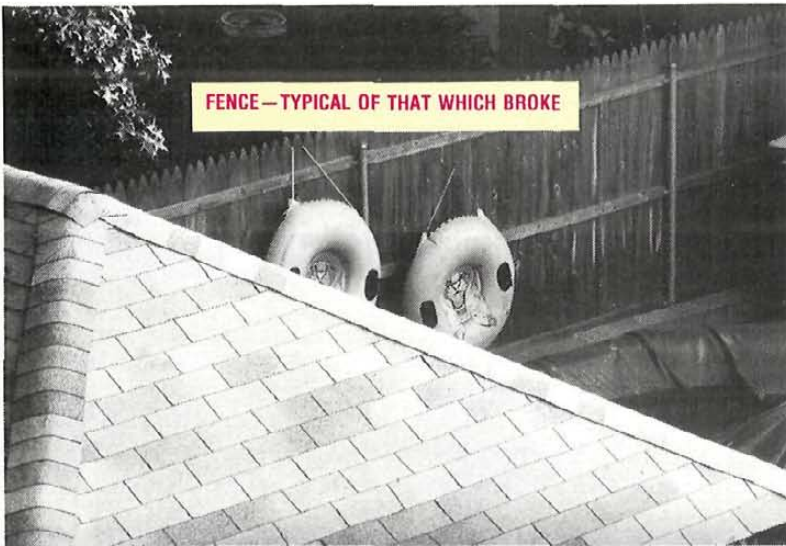
So Morton spends Sunday reading the *Weekly World News* in a beach chair beside the pool. He never actually goes in the water. He tells me after all that work he just doesn't feel like swimming. And get this: Howie and Brenda aren't allowed in yet because Howie pissed in the basement, and Brenda, I don't know, she farted or something. I

gray-brown hair hanging in her face and not enough teeth to fill her mouth. Yeah, she says, they're a real problem, those two. So she invites us in and makes us instant coffee. You should have seen that shit. It looked like bunker oil.

Anyhow, Debbie Morton says they bought the house with money from an insurance settlement. Al hurt himself at the warehouse, she says. They shouldn't have made him lift all



THE NEIGHBORHOOD (MORTON'S HOUSE MISSING FROM PHOTO)



guess Debbie didn't get in because they don't make mutant bathing suits.

Anyway, Monday night the pool lets go. The water tears out Bartuli's fence, smashes through a cellar window, and fills his basement to about a foot deep. Bartuli is mad, but Morton gives him a riding lawn mower and a small motorcycle he says were "extra" down at the warehouse, and Bartuli decides to forget about it.

Then guess what. Stupid Morton gets fired. Or maybe he quit. I don't know. But in January he stops going to work, and he hangs around for the next nine months or so. When the weather gets nice, he sits in the backyard next to the remains of the swimming pool, watching the paint peel off the house.

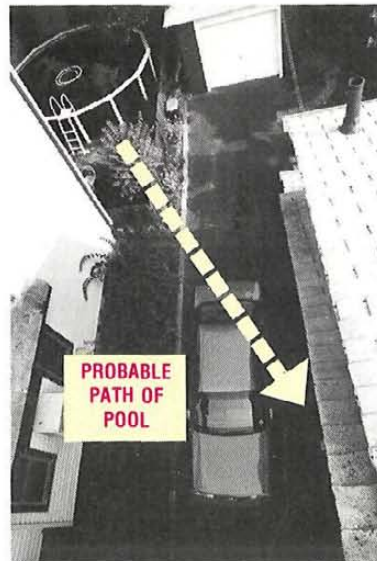
Oh yeah, the hanging gutter fell off by itself. It missed the car, but I was pissed anyway, so I tossed it over the fence. And that's where it stayed, in his backyard, next to that stupid, bombed-out pool.

Then his unemployment runs out, and Morton comes up with a brain-storm. He comes home with this big old blue Ford truck. He paints "Morton Trucking" on the side, but you can still make out where it used to say "Avis."

Now this is the good part: Morton knows from working in a warehouse that you gotta go out and ask for business, so he actually drives around to companies, asking to see their traffic managers. The most unbelievable thing is that one of these companies calls him back, and it's a big one.

The company was, like, Modess or Kotex or one of those. I don't know how this happened, how anybody could believe this fat-faced jerk, but this company obviously doesn't know that Morton Trucking is just one old, ex-rental truck. They must think he's a fleet or something, because they call

him to pick up 25,000 pounds of stuff. It was, like, a hundred different small deliveries to stores all over the state.



How do I know? Because I wound up helping him, that's how.

Instead of coming clean and telling these guys they made a mistake, he heads out there in the Ford. When he backs in he says, "Gee, I don't have room for it all in *this* truck"—like he's got a bunch of them, right? He tells them he'll have to make a couple of trips.

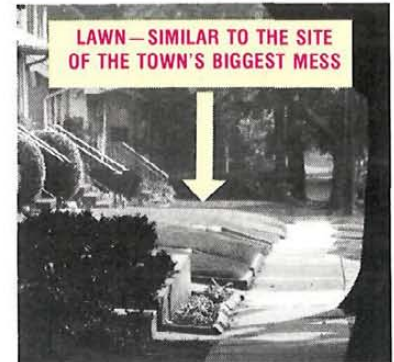
Now if these guys had any brains, they'd ask themselves how come this jerk didn't come with a tractor-trailer, but I guess you don't have the brightest guys in the feminine-napkin business. These guys load what they can in the Ford, let him sign for it, and wait for him to come back.

Morton brings the stuff home, and unloads the boxes into his garage and on the driveway. Then he goes back for

a second load. The second load he puts in the backyard, and the third load he puts on the front lawn. He's almost out of real estate when he calls me and Bartuli over to help. Now here's Morton, Bartuli, stupid Debbie, and me trying to figure out which cartons go where.

Then, honest to God, it starts to rain. It doesn't just rain a little, it pours for, like, three days straight. Our front porch and garage are full of cartons. But even with Bartuli's garage, there isn't enough space for all of them.

These are big cartons, most of them are still on Morton's lawn, and all the sanitary napkins inside soak up three days' worth of rain. They must have weighed, like, 100,000 pounds each. When the rain finally stops, every carton Morton tries to move falls apart.



It's got to be the biggest mess in the history of the town.

No lie, it finally takes a payloader to scoop the shit into a Dumpster and haul it away. The town bills Morton for it, but I don't think he ever paid.

Anyhow, Morton is not real popular, and not long after that he gets indicted or something. We're not sure if it's because of his bad luck with female absorbency products, the "extras" from the warehouse, or something else altogether, because we just don't see him anymore. He just isn't around.

Then one day, this Ryder rental truck parks next door, and a couple of guys with Harley-Davidson tattoos load it up. When they're done, they drive away in an old Camaro. Then Debbie knocks on our door. She's got Howie and Brenda with her.

She says they're moving, their house is locked up, and they need to use the bathroom. Of course we let 'em—but we shouldn't have. That night, after they're long gone, I find out one of those bastards stole my electric shaver.

The turds. ■

# LOADS OF FUN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 55

Shot glass? This is quality merchandise, and I'll give you top pick for half price."

But I don't want merchandise, I want meaning, and Gary is quick to give it to me.

"The deal is, we make a ton of money off souvenirs, that's what it means. You know, it costs us, like, four bucks to make a T-shirt, and we sell it for three times that. All these things you're so fuckin' uptight about—like the skulls and the "Hard As Death" T-shirts and all that shit—you know, kids go for it in a big way, man. Nobody's forcing them to wear the shit. And I don't even care if they wear it or not, so long as they buy. Next question, guy."

What about charges of sexism, I ask, noticing, as we exit the souvenir building, the long line of boys waiting in front of the Chicks in Tight Jeans Diorama. Women—girls, really, in tube tops and teased hair—are expected to stand by their men as they stagger from attraction to attraction, or content themselves with the Household Appliance and Baby Tent.

Gary sighs heavily, taking a power handshake from a passing customer.

"Look, man, you eggheads—and I don't mean nothing by that 'cause, hey, if you got brains or whatever, that's cool, man, the world could use some brains—but you eggheads are always ridin' my ass about that. We just thought we'd put some shit in that chicks'd enjoy, and the first thing that came to mind was babies and appliances. Admit it, man, it's like scientific or biological or whatever: chicks go apeshit over babies and appliances.

"And then there's our biggest date attraction: the Guitar Walk of Fame Wax House Boat Ride. Girls also lose their shit over guitarists, and we got 'em better than life-size, if you know what I'm sayin'. We gotta put new clothes on the Steve Vai statue just about every other day. And hey, guys are into it, too. You get a guy alone in a tunnel with a Ted Nugent statue and that guy's gonna check Ted's stuff out, know what I mean? It's a natural fact, man. So it's, like, entertainment for everyone."

The sun goes down in upstate New York. I watch it with Gary from the back of his van. We're talking about the future of Shitloads, and Gary is uncompromising when it comes to changing the park to appeal to a family audience. "My philosophy," he says, cupping his hands around another Kool and standing with his back to the wind and the screams blowing off of Survival Acre, "is why bother? I'm making good bread off the kids, and besides, in a year or two, these thirteen- and fourteen-year-olds will have their own families. I'm just interested in building a real loyal base. Kids today are parents tomorrow, man."

"Literally."

"Yeah, but not just in books, man, in real life, too. And already some of the kids who first came here are bringin' their own kids in. It's cool. I meet their needs. I'm not into expanding just for the sake of expanding. I mean, the whole package has to, like, reflect my total commitment to excellence."

As the bars on the adjacent strip begin to fill, Gary Rickhauser—not naturally a reflective man—grows pensive. "We're totally fuckin' unique, know what I'm sayin'? Sometimes, man, it seems like a total hassle, but then I think, 'Who else is gonna do this?' No one, man. And I'm makin' a fuckin' mint, don't forget that. So it's cool. That's the word for it, man, cool. Hey, let's close this shit up and check out this new place, Harvey's. They got a great bowlin' machine, man. I like to play Flash." ■

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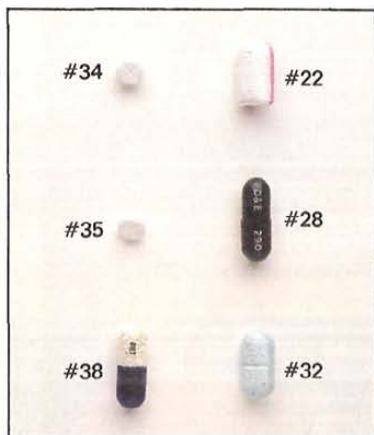
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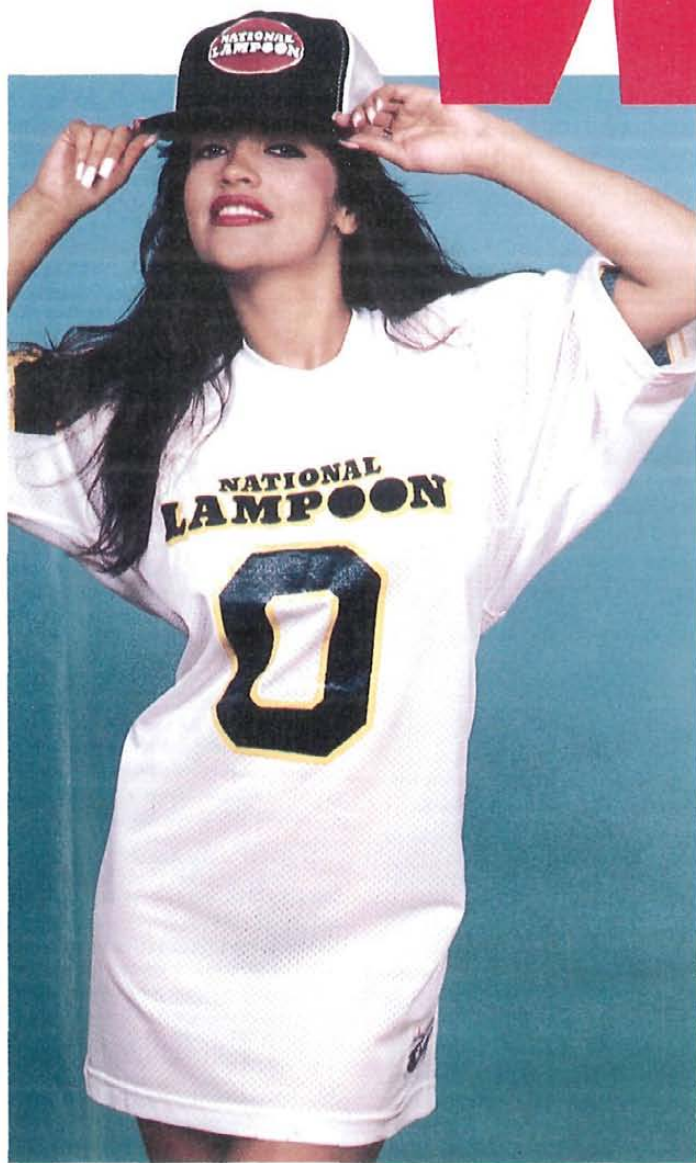
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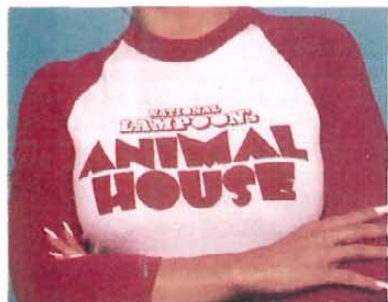
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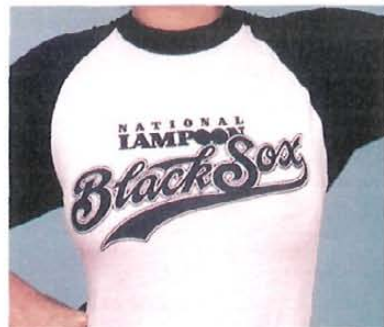
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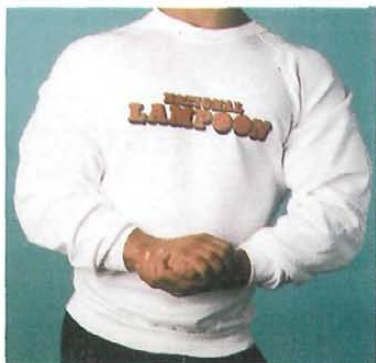
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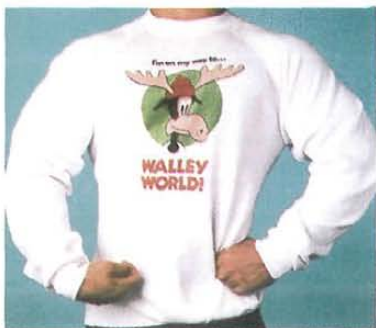
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# US OUT

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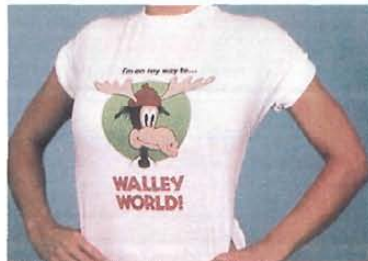
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- (B) MANCHESTER, IOWA — To deter wandering in the halls, authorities at West Delaware High School required each student on his way to the bathroom to wear a toilet seat around his neck. — *Washington Post*
- (C) After an eighteen-month study, the British Academy of Science recommended to Parliament that British rock stars be prohibited from selling their semen to commercial sperm banks. — *UMKC University News*
- (D) A local citizen was arrested and charged with public indecency after he allegedly was observed placing his male organ in a jar of slaw dressing at the local supermarket — *Downers Grove (Illinois) Reporter*



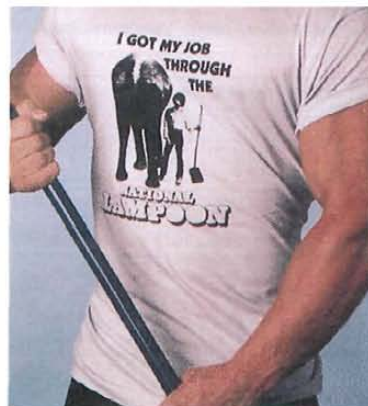
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A Saga of an American Family

HELEN NORM  
KATHY BOBBY

by B.K. Taylor © 1990

THE APPLETONS - NORM, HELEN, AND NORM'S PARENTS, HAVE JUST ENJOYED A PLAY IN THE CITY. BUT AS THEY RETURN TO THEIR CAR...



FROM THE SHADOWS...



DO SOMETHING, NORM!



THE BEWILDERED MUGGER STANDS CONFUSED, AS GRANDMA APPLETON BEGINS A STRANGE WHIRLING MOTION WITH HER HEAVILY SPRAYED BEEHIVE HAIR.



# SAM de GROOT

ONE OF ONLY 54 PARALYZED PRIVATE DETECTIVES IN THE FREE WORLD

SAM IS NOW ABLE TO SPEAK! BY PUSHING SWALLOWED AIR AGAINST HIS LOWER STOMACH MUSCLES, SUBDUED SPEECH CAN BE HEARD THROUGH HIS ENEMA TUBE

I'M AN AMATEUR VENTRILOQUIST, AND I WONDERED IF YOU'D SHOW ME HOW YOU DO IT...



HELLO, MR. de GROOT! MY AUNT MARY WORKS IN THE HOSPITAL LAUNDRY AND SHE TOLD ME ABOUT YOU...



SHE HEARD THAT EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE TOTALLY PARALYZED, YOU LEARNED HOW TO SPEAK THROUGH YOUR ENEMA TUBE....



I COULD HOOK UP AN ENEMA TUBE FROM ME TO MY DUMMY, AND WHEN HE SPEAKS, MY LIPS WON'T MOVE—NOT EVEN A TINY BIT!



...SURE...I'LL...SHOW...YOU...HOW...IT...TOOK...A...LOTTA...PRACTICE...BUT...I...DID...IT...



HEY, NEAT!

...HERE'S...WHAT...I...DO—  
...I...SWALLOW...SOME...  
AIR... THEN...I—

EXCUSE ME, MR. de GROOT, DO YOU MIND IF I LOOK DOWN WHERE THE TUBE IS?

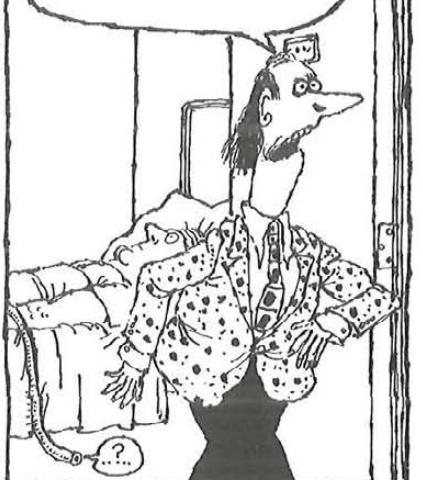


...I... SWALLOW... SOME...  
AIR... THEN... I...

AW, YOU BIG PHONY!

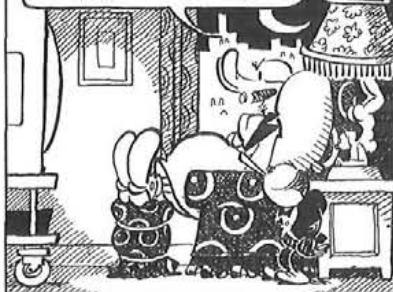


WHEN YOU TALK YOUR ASS MOVES!

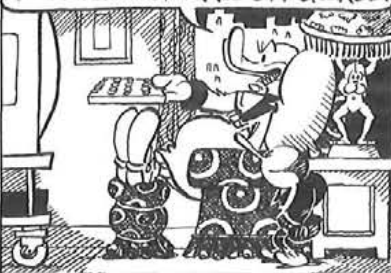


# Dirty Duck by Bobby London

WELL, WEEVIL, WE FINALLY HAVE CABLE TELEVISION.. NOW WE DON'T HAVE TO GO OUT AND RISK GETTING MUGGED EVERY TIME WE TRY TO RENT A TRIPLE-X VIDEOTAPE.



YESSIR.. WE HAVE A WIDER VARIETY OF PROGRAMMING, WE'RE SUPPORTING FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND EXPRESSION ON THE AIR WAVES, AND WE GET TO SWEAL OUT OUR HARD-EARNED BUCKS TO WATCH EVEN MORE COMMERCIALS.



NOW THIS PROGRAM SHOULD MAKE ALL THOSE SELF-APPOINTED, ULTRA-CONSERVATIVE GUARDIANS OF PUBLIC DECENCY SCREAM FOR MORE CENSORSHIP.. JUST LOOK AT THE VIOLENCE, THE BLOOD SHED!



AND LOOK AT THIS: BRALESS, UNDER-AGE GIRLS JUMPING UP AND DOWN TO AN UNRELENTING JUNGLE BEAT, WAGGING THEIR CROTCHES AT THE CAMERA.. MUST BE ONE OF THOSE MONDO-WEIRDO DOCUMENTARIES ABOUT PRIMITIVE CULTURES.



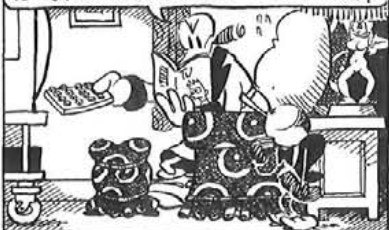
OH, YEAH?. WELL, WHAT ABOUT THIS: TWO WELL-HEELED MEN IN LATE MIDDLE AGE, WEARING MAKEUP, ENGAGING IN STRANGE CONVERSATION, AND EXCHANGING LASCIVIOUS GLANCES.



WELL, LET'S WATCH A MOVIE, THEN.. MAYBE THERE'S A TEENAGE SLICE-AND-DICE PICTURE ON.. OH, HERE'S SOMETHING: "IN WHICH WE SERVE (1972), NOEL COWARDS TRIBUTE TO BRITISH SEAMEN."



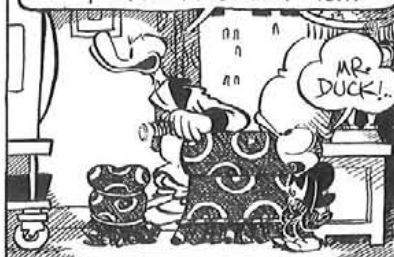
WAIT A MINUTE, LISTEN TO THIS: "CIAO, EMMANUELE (ITALIAN, 1975) \* R: STRONG LANGUAGE, MUDITY, ADULT SITUATIONS, YOUNG WOMAN IN ROMEO SEARCHING FOR HER SEXUAL IDENTITY SERVICES ENTIRE COMMUNIST PARTY. BILLY AND SYLVIA KRISTEL, UMBERTO BARCELONA..". NOW, THIS IS MORE LIKE IT.. LET'S GIVE IT A TRY.



SIGH.. THIS ONE'S NO GOOD, EITHER.. THEY'VE CUT ALL THE BEST PARTS.. NOW WE HAVE TO SIT THROUGH AN EXCRUCIATINGLY DULL STORYLINE JUST TO SEE A PAIR OF FABULOUS HOOTERS.. IF WE WANT SOME REAL ACTION, WE'LL HAVE TO WATCH THE "EXPLICIT" STATION OR PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNEL J..



HEY, HEY!.. WHAT'S THIS?!!.. "DUE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESTRICTIONS, THE EXTRA-FILTHY, MASTY CHANNEL WILL BE PRE-EMPTED BY C-SPAN".. WHY, THIS IS AN OUTRAGE!.. A BLATANT VIOLATION OF MY FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS!..



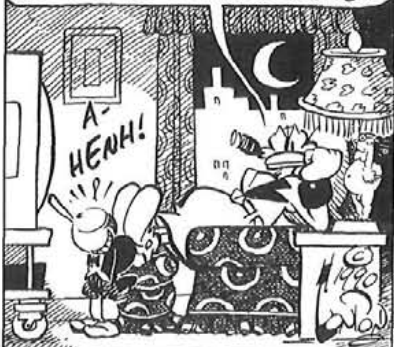
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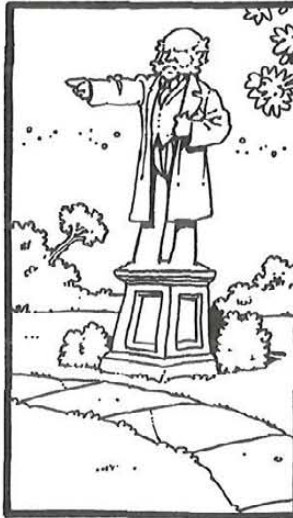
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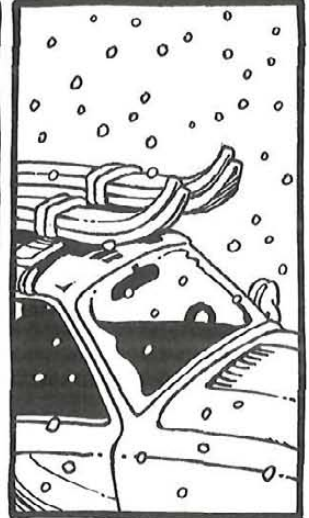
Rick  
MEARY  
©90



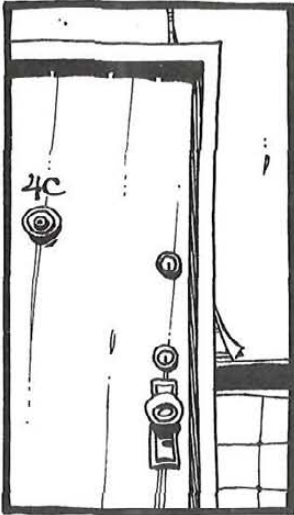
IMPACTED TEETH



ULCER OF THE  
STOMACH



SCHIZOPARENIA



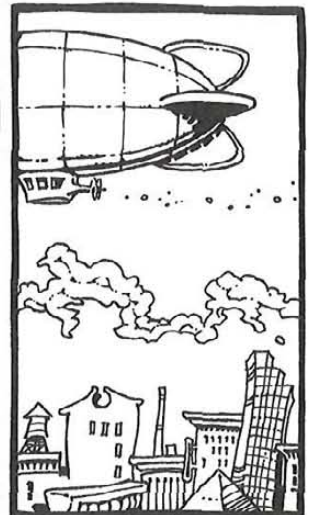
EYE INFECTION



SINUSITIS



SCIATICA



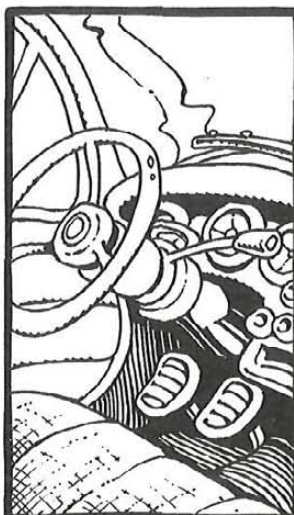
HIGH BLOOD  
PRESSURE



ALZHEIMER'S  
DISEASE



DIABETES

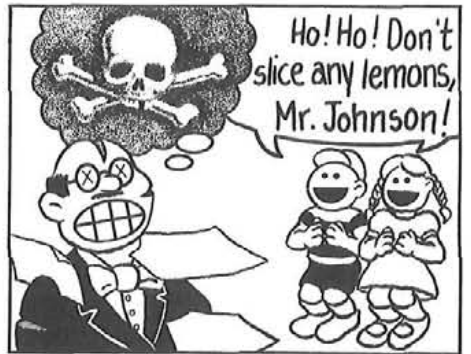


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ANEMIA

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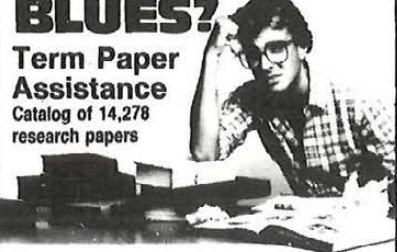
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At *National Lampon*, our aim is to create a magazine that's "uniquely you." But we need your help to achieve that goal. Please fill out as many of the questions in this survey as you can.

Age:  
 Under 18     34-40  
 18-24     Over 40  
 25-34

Sex:  
 M     F

Income Level:  
 Under \$15,000     \$35,001-60,000  
 \$15,000-25,000     \$60,000-100,000  
 \$25,001-35,000     Over \$100,000

Credit Cards:  
 MasterCard     American Express  
 VISA

Cash Machine PIN:

In the last year, I have purchased the following:

Automobile     Tobacco products  
 Sporting goods     Beverages  
 Audio/video equipment     Gift certificates  
 Durable goods     Food

My hobbies include:

Watching stuff     Spectator reading  
 Auto repair     Quality time  
 Spectator sports     Gossip  
 Reading     Cannot be included  
 Volunteer work     in any present  
 Acquirewear     classification

I purchased *National Lampon* at:

Convenience store     Inherited from  
 Newsstand     deceased relative  
 Church social     Subscriber

If a subscriber, how long have you subscribed?

Do you hide the magazine when your parents/children come over? (Circle one.)

I feel the magazine could be improved by:

More humor     Esoteric philosophy  
 Fewer humor     Magazine cannot  
 Special Dave Berg     be improved  
 section     I don't know  
 Positive, contemporary attitude

*National Lampon* makes me feel the following:

Doom     Foreboding  
 Failure     I don't know  
 Ruin

Did you have a dog as a child?

What was its name?

How much did you love it?

Not at all     More than anything or  
 Very little     anyone before or since  
 Somewhat

Did it die:

Naturally     Was put to sleep  
 Accident

If the latter, do you feel that your cold-blooded decision to assassinate your dog was consistent with your professed love?

I'd rather spend my free time:

On my StairMaster  
 In a Landers-sisters sandwich  
 Looking for change under the seats of commuter buses  
 Reading *National Lampon* and wishing there were more puzzles

If there's a lot of hype about a TV show, I feel I have to like it.

Agree     Disagree

Pick a number from 1 to 10:

1     6  
 2     7  
 3     8  
 4     9  
 5     10

What is the best title for this passage?

"Development Comes to India"  
 "Pale Fire"  
 "Susan's Thoughtful Gesture"  
 "Spectator Reading: The Sport of the Nineties"  
 "I Don't Know"

Which of the following marketing surveys makes you

feel like a piece of meat?

The one in my coffee maker  
 The ones in the mall  
 The one in my air conditioner  
 I feel like a piece of meat all the time

When I see an ad, I'm always a sucker for:

Babes, the barer the better     "Offbeat"  
 Wealthy people I'd like to     humor  
 emulate     Lab coats

How much do you make really?

Under \$15,000     \$35,001-60,000  
 \$15,000-25,000     \$60,000-100,000  
 \$25,001-35,000     Over \$100,000

What is your occupation?

How long have you worked where you work?

Do you feel comfortable with your co-workers?

Do you sometimes feel inadequate, or that you are not the best-qualified person to do your job?

Do you sometimes feel that people at work keep track of your mistakes, and may someday use them against you?

Who are your real friends at work? Do you honestly believe it's possible to have a truthful, personal relationship with anyone who works with you?

If everyone at work dislikes you so much, don't you think they must have a good reason? What is that reason?

What do you think about the following? (Please check the appropriate space next to each item.)

Capital-gains tax	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Mazda Miata	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Bow ries	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Nicolas Cage	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Nautilus	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Jewelry	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
William Reilly	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Car fax	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Yankees	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Beef	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Shoe boycotts	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Space shuttle	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Unification	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Barcelona	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Jenny Holzer	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Shelby Foote	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Apples	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Royalty	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Rollerblades	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Fire	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Parodies	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
National parks	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Soccer	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad
Orange Julius	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Bad

What is your name?

What is an anagram of your name?

If you could change your name, what would be an anagram of your new name?

List, in descending order in the space provided, your closest friends and family members.

1.

2.

If you wear pants, how do you put them on?

Fewer than one leg at a time  
 One leg at a time  
 More than one leg at a time  
 I have no legs

How do you get to Carnegie Hall?

Give us five good reasons why we shouldn't give you a knuckle sandwich.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Type of humor I prefer is

Gentle, slice-of-life tales  
 Pieces with funny-sounding words and names  
 Sophisticated drollery  
 Scathing satires of obvious public figures  
 Unenlightened racist wisecracks

Which pretensions do you express through the clothes you wear? Choose one or more.

I am a hip and modern person  
 I am natural and down-to-earth

I want people to think clothes don't mean much to me  
 I am smart and possess great class

What is your occupation when daydreaming?

Professional sports player  
 "Morning Zoo" DJ  
 Systems sales representative  
 Talk-show guest

On a separate sheet of paper, draw a map of your house.

Draw a picture of yourself in the map.

Draw pictures of your family in the map.

Color the map—any colors you like.

Scrubble over the map with a black marker.

Congratulate yourself for being an asshole.

The following would get me to subscribe to the *National Lampon*:

A five-minute ad on sleazy cable channels, like the kind *Playboy* does  
 A sneaker phone  
 More service pieces  
 Celebrities, celebrities, celebrities!

My bologna has a first name. It's:

Oscar     Jennifer  
 Joseph     Trip

Which of the following items do you steal from work?

Stationery and paper  
 Computer disks  
 Hours' worth of long-distance calling  
 Company cars

You have two sons; one is a good boy. The other, a classic fuck-up, asks you for his inheritance and goes away for two years. When he returns, you:

Give him the cold shoulder  
 Tell your good son to kill him  
 Give him a hug and throw a big party  
 Drive around for a while to collect your thoughts

Fill in the blanks:

I like \_\_\_\_\_.    Long live the \_\_\_\_!  
 I do not care for \_\_\_\_\_.    My dad kisses like a \_\_\_\_\_.

Using the chart provided, circle the teeth you could live without.

Indicate the location of your tongue in the chart.

Doesn't the chart look a lot like a bird's-eye view of the Druidic ruins known as Stonehenge?

Yes     No

Would you burn the roof of your mouth to save eight people you don't know who live in a foreign country? Ten people? What if they lived in your country?

If you suddenly turned gay who would be the first man you'd sleep with? (Guys only.)

Adam Ant  
 Fred "The Hammer" Williamson  
 Jeremy Irons  
 The owner of a Chinese restaurant  
 That could never happen to me

Would you live the rest of your life with no sense of smell for \$750,000?

If it turned out your parents were really imposors, who would you most suspect your parents to be?

Marge and Gower Champion  
 Julius and Ethel Rosenberg  
 Bob and Ray  
 Claus and Sunny von Bulow

How often in the last six months have you:

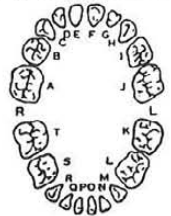
Overreached yourself on the job  
 Acted out of spite  
 Stared pointlessly at frozen foods in the supermarket

If you had to donate a body part to save the life of your identical twin, would you rather it be your:

Sphincter of Oddi     Hypothalamus  
 Islands of Langerhans     Brain

For you personally, is it better to have:

Loved and lost  
 Never loved and never lost  
 Never loved and lost everything  
 Loved everything and never lost anything



Not a magazine.  
Not a comic book.  
Not for children.  
Not a dream.  
Barely a reality.  
...Something different.



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